UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

LIVING TRANSFORMATION:
BEYOND MIDLIFE CRISIS TO RESTORING ETHICAL SPACE

by

Elizabeth Ann Lange ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

International/Intercultural Education

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled ***Living Transformation: Beyond Midlife Crisis to Restoring Ethical Space*** submitted by Elizabeth Ann Lange in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in **International/Intercultural Education in Educational Policy Studies**.

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To Sylvia Lange, my mother, for her love of knowledge and lived faith.

To Eric Lange, my father, for his love of the bountiful Earth and lived ethics.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the potential of critical transformative learning for revitalizing citizen action. By engaging 14 participants in transformative learning, this study explores educational entry points, transformative learning for catalyzing social action and for transforming working and living beyond industrial models. It also critiques existing theories of transformative learning. Action research methodology was modified into a double spiral process.

The first finding was that pedagogical entry points relate to the historical context. The participants had weathered workplace "downsizing and restructuring" and came searching for balance between work and home and "to make a difference in the world" through more meaningful work. All of the participants described disillusionment and fragmentation, important pedagogical entry points.

Typical interpretations in adult education literature suggest that disillusionment is symptomatic of a midlife crisis. This study found, however, that midlife crisis theories do not account for the larger social context that shapes this "psychological" phenomenon. Disillusionment is not only about identity questions but about ethical questions. Many people project their ethical horizons into their job, yet experience an increasing loss of space to speak or act by their ethics. Disillusionment is the inability to "make a difference" through a job as a vehicle for civic responsibility.

A third finding is fragmentation described as "whirling" at a frenetic pace. Deeply embedded in bureaucratic organizational life and mechanistic household life, participants are alienated from relational ties that manifest balance and wholeness. The participants embodied the ethical contradictions and mechanistic structures of modernity/postmodernity.

A fourth finding is that "restorative learning" is a vital dimension of "transformative learning." The participants did not exhibit an ethical malaise, but required ethical sanctuary to restore deeply held beliefs to a conscious place in daily decision making. The learning process also fostered a radical relatedness in which participants restored organic connections to time, body, space, and human relations. They experienced transformation through a broadened worldview and to shift from a mode of having to a mode of being. Eroding the interlocking cultural messages about work and

breaking through the property structures embedded in the consumptive lifestyle enabled the participants to become more active citizens.

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As the Kenyan proverb says, "It takes a village to raise a child." So it is with my children. So it has been with my dissertation. I nurtured both my children and my dissertation together, but it was far from a solo effort.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to my mom and dad, Sylvia and Eric Lange, who originally fed and nurtured the dream of higher education at the supper table, debating issues; and the after-supper table, editing school papers. I dedicate this dissertation to them, as it is as much their dream and their pride.

Their other dream and pride is their grandchildren, my dear daughters Blaire and Erin, whom they lovingly nurtured as I sought concentrated writing time. As they hammered and glued school projects, I hammered out and glued together words and ideas. This experience of "village" has instilled in me the importance of such a starting point for community sustainability, in which all are needed for collective well-being and valued for their contributions.

But my experience of village has been greater still. The loving patience and visionary commitments of Ian Waugh enabled me to continue putting one word after the other. He is still teaching me how "to live" when study seeps over its bounds and I lose sight of my "true work." His two daughters, Jenny and Carly, took Blaire and Erin under their wings at times, exploring horse stables or creek valleys. To you all, I owe many thanks.

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To the 14 participants of this study, who endured many requests for journalling and interviews, and who so willingly shared some of their deepest thoughts and yearnings, I offer my humble thanks. I am truly blessed to be surrounded with such generous people who continue to enact sustainability in so many creative and committed ways.

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Finally, words cannot express my thanks to my "mentors of life," Blaire and Erin. They first taught me to flow with the rhythms of my body when *in utero* and then to flow with their bodies and learning processes ever since. They took me kicking and screaming out of the industrial model of working and living into an ecological model, without any of us knowing it. They shunned the clock (still do) and retaught me over and over what the real priorities in life are. They were my barometer when too much work or worry distracted me. Together we learned to nurture our rhythms in association with the seasonal rhythms around us, taking to reflect and celebrate together. This became our liturgy of living in tune with an even larger village of species and planetary events.

And so it is that one village flows into another. With humble gratitude to the villages that have sustained me, I offer these thoughts and stories, hoping that the life-giving capacities of our local and global villages can likewise be encouraged and sustained.

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTING TO A QUESTION

The history of words, of language, of perceptions, is an urgent venture for all of us who are committed to life. (Esteva, 1988: 140)

When [people] lack a critical understanding of their reality, apprehending it in fragments which they do not perceive as interacting constituent elements of the whole, they cannot truly know that reality. To truly know it, they would have to reverse their starting point: they would need to have a total vision of the context in order to subsequently to separate and isolate its constituent elements and by means of this analysis achieve a clearer perception of the whole. (Freire, 1970: 95)

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

This study examines the potential of critical transformative adult learning for revitalizing citizen action. Democracy is fundamentally hinged to the ability of all citizens to play an informed and active role in determining the shape of their life together. Yet, there appears to be despondency among the Western middle class in exercising their citizen responsibilities, despite alarming media coverage of complex environmental and social issues around the globe. Atrophying citizen activity is often described as a "crisis in democracy."

To explain this crisis, many theorists disparage the narcissism (Lasch, 1979), anxiety (Giddens, 1991), unconsciousness (Saul, 1995), denial (Bowers, 1997; Spretnak, 1999), and waning historical memory (Hobsbawn, 1994) that have infected the public. Even though the Modern Age has been constructed on the ideals of liberty, equality, and democracy, citizens appear to have forgotten their past and do not engage their hard-won rights for democratic discussion of public issues. The malaise in discourse and paralysis in action is frightening as more natural and social scientists are urgently calling for action to avert looming crises that threaten the planet and whole societies. As Borgmann declared and many agree, "The public square is naked; . . . we have no common life, that what holds us all together is a cold and impersonal design" (Borgmann, 1992: 3; Giroux, 1988; Saul, 1995).

One task that public school educators set themselves is educating young people to take up their rightful citizen roles. This runs parallel to adult educators engaging adult citizens in critical reflection and action on society-wide issues through any number of forums—from social movements to professional development programs. One educational approach for citizenship education is transformational learning. The *raison d'être* of this kind of education is social transformation in which change at the *radix* or root of systems facilitates a "move beyond the existing form" (Mayo, 1999: 24). Transformative learning encourages a profound or deep-level change in both society's structures and human consciousness that can manifest the higher qualities of a society—justice, peace and ecological integrity. Critical transformative learning involves a pedagogy of critique (of what is) tempered by a pedagogy of hope (for what could be). Whereas transformative education has helped to empower impoverished communities in Southern[1] nations, transformative educators in Northern contexts often face resistance, suspicion, passivity, apathy, or despair. Facilitating citizen action through transformative education among the middle class has proven to be a knotty issue.

The typical approach taken by transformative educators is to frame the social issues in such a compelling way, by factual or emotional content, that learners are moved to take up their citizen responsibilities and act. Yet, as many educators have experienced, although it is easy to study social and environmental crises, the step to action is rarely taken. In their frustration, educators charge that the public is distracted, in denial, or resistant to change. This frustration was expressed well by Lester Milbrath (1966), who was concerned about the race against the ticking environmental clock.

> *But how do we steer it so that society moves in a more sustainable direction? . . . My theory begins with the premise that people cannot change if they're not paying attention. The greatest difficulty is to wake people up, to get them to pay serious attention to a problem on the horizon while they're busy with other problems right in their lap. Trying to scare them with the chaotic scenario I just described probably wouldn't be effective. My theory says that people have a powerful tendency to deny messages they don't want to hear. So they'll more likely believe people who say there's no need for preventive action. Feeling they have more than enough worries now, most people will try to enjoy a few daily pleasures and not worry about possible trouble in the future. The stark reality, then, is that most people aren't listening. They don't know what's coming and they don't want to be bothered. It'll probably take a very strong jolt from nature before they'll pay attention. . . . A jolt that's large enough to change them will probably be a collapse of natural systems that they've always depended on. . . . I don't understand why people refuse to listen. I think about that question every day. Maybe you, or people*

---

[1] The terms developed/developing nations, Third/First World or South/North are imprecise and unrepresentative of diverse national experiences. They set up a dualism that characterizes the problematic conceptual construct of "development." If used, the designation Third World or South will refer to the non-aligned nations during the Cold War period.

> *like you, can come up with a better idea for reaching people with this difficult message. (117-119)*

This study takes up Milbrath's challenge by exploring the nature of the "malaise" and developing and piloting an educational process with the purpose of revitalizing citizen action, as one lever for social change.

To do this, three objectives were proposed. First, this study would empirically analyze the cognitive and normative conditions within middle-class consciousness:[2] "Is the lack of citizen discussion and participation in societal issues a result of a public malaise and, if so, what conditions are reflected among the research participants that offer insight into how this malaise is created?" To explore this question, the task was to identify appropriate entry points for a transformative adult pedagogy. Preliminary investigation revealed that an important entry point was the issue of work. Many adults expressed their fears and confusion about the changing structure of work, notably the loss of work or the intensification of work, brought about by the globalization of the market.

Second, the study would assess the potential for a new model of transformative learning for catalyzing socially transformative action. The key question was "Are transformative learning and action principles effective to assist workers in rethinking the purpose of work and in creating new ways of working and living that contribute to sustainability?" A literature review to determine the content of the course revealed that the concept of sustainability[3] has significant potential in offering an alternative vision for work, a vision with transformative power.

Third, the findings of the study would be used to critique the existing literature on adult transformative learning. In particular, the notion of transformative learning must be understood within the modern agenda of enlightenment, empowerment, and freedom—a rallying cry that has persisted for some 400 years. This study questions the preoccupation with change and transformation and examines the implicit cosmology, ontology, and epistemology that resides in current theories.

---

[2] I am using a Marxian concept of consciousness best described by Paula Allman (1999). Consciousness is the thoughts, ideas and concepts we hold. These have been shaped by our social relations and in turn shape how we relate to other people and the material and natural worlds. We can understand the prevailing form of consciousness by examining "real people and their activity, especially the activity that took place within the way they were organized to produce and reproduce their material existence' (1999: 38). Marx's interest was to enable people to understand that domination in these relations can be changed. Paulo Freire (1970) calls this conscientization.

[3] Sustainability is most commonly understood as ecological sustainability whereby the demands placed upon the environment by human society can be met without reducing the capacity of the environment to provide for future generations (Hawken, 1993). Sustainability is distinct from sustainable development which attempts to rationalize economic growth with minor "green" adjustments. The notion of sustainability is redefined in Chapter Four to include personal and community sustainability.

This chapter shall briefly review the historical, educational, and personal context that framed this study and then provide an overview of the study and the findings.

THE MODERN AGE: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

At the millennial turn, the process of epochal change has become relevant. Whether we consider the Neolithic, Ancient, Medieval or Modern Ages, each new age provided a cosmology (theory of the cosmos or universe), ontology (theory of existence), and epistemology (theory of knowledge) all interconnected through new material relations.[4] Of the ongoing assessments of the Modern Age that currently permeate many fields of study, there is a search to move beyond the problematic aspects of the modern worldview and the deep socioeconomic issues, a search shared in this study. In the anticipation of epochal change, an analysis of how changes in cosmology, ontology, and epistemology produced the Modern Age is necessitated as one way to see beyond.

The conversation on the nature of reality, the human ability to know reality, and the human place in this reality has been ongoing since the Ancient Greeks, although undoubtedly it has a much longer history—as long as human history itself (Campbell, 1972; Ruether, 1992). At the dawn of a new millennium, this conversation has particular significance, for in the dominant Western[5] postmodern ethos, reality is considered ultimately unknowable; the human ability to think about this reality is contingent, subjective and partial; and the paradoxical place of humans is insignificance in the cosmos and domination of the Earth.

---

[4] The view taken is that all aspects of human life, including non-material aspects such as language, beliefs, and theories, are dialectically related to material expressions. For instance, in the acts of production and reproduction, people enter into relation with nature and other people. These acts take place within the context of certain social relations, language, and beliefs. Therefore, the material and non-material are internally related (Sayer, 1987).

[5] This study primarily concerns the Western intellectual and spiritual tradition given that this is the context I and most of the participants share. However, resources from many other traditions, including Eastern and Aboriginal will be drawn upon throughout.

In modernism,[6] no longer is the universe considered a divine creation full of mystery, in which the human mind is patterned after the Great Mind and humans are an essential part of the larger whole that has purpose and intelligence. Pre-ancient, ancient, and medieval cosmologies founded on the centrality of the sacred have been dismantled by the scientific—Newton's mechanical clockwork universe, Copernicus' marginalization of the Earth through heliocentrism, and Darwin's evolution of the species. As David Suzuki (1997) cynically summarized, "Darwinian evolution has cast us as the children of change, creatures with enough self-awareness and wit to recognize ourselves as a kind of cosmic joke" (15). Disenchanted and dislocated, humans are now alone in a vast universe with no underlying *telos* or purpose. Correspondingly, the natural world has not been considered a nurturing life-giver but rather a fearsome force with unpredictable fury. As Francis Bacon (as cited in Shiva, 1991) asserted in the 16th century, humans need "the power to conquer and subdue her, to shake her to her foundations" (209). With the universe cleansed of all spiritual properties, humans privileged their rational intelligence to ensure survival in this random universe.

Originally modernism was the reaction against the strictures of medieval or traditional societies—the weight of historical memory, the dogmatism of tradition, and the obligations of communal life that subordinated individuals to oppressive and often corrupt authorities. In particular, it was a reaction against the Christian worldview that became institutionalized during the Middle Ages as a near monolithic form (Tarnas, 1991). Given this context, the notions of change and transformation away from these constraints became embedded in the Western cultural psyche as crucial for individual and societal progress.

The origins of modernism were not founded on reaction only. Although reaction provides the energy for change and glimpses of possibility, it rarely provides the principles of a new way. Through the Enlightenment *philosophes*, scientists, and industrialists, modernism resulted in a dramatic redefinition of the cosmos, humans, time, and space—new conceptions projected onto the world. These profound changes in cosmology, epistemology, and ontology are the context for this study, for these changes have created the cultural foundations of the modern worldview. Together with significant socioeconomic changes, these factors have created the modern condition[7] we experience daily. This historical context is vital to the study as it facilitates the rethinking of the modernist notions of transformational learning and work, expanded on in Chapters Two and Ten.

---

[6] To clarify use of terms, I shall use modernism or the Modern Age here to denote the overall epoch founded on a secular cosmology, a rational and scientific epistemology and industrial forms of living and working. Modernity refers to the 20th century and modernization refers to the international development projects that are one example of industrializing traditional societies (see Rostow, 1966).

EDUCATION AND THE MODERN AGE: THE EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Within the progress ideology of the Modern Age, education has been heralded as the harbinger of progress. Since classical times, education has had two seemingly contradictory faces: the role of *reproducing* the existing social order and the role of *transforming* the existing social order. These roles depend on the moral, political, and economic goals being pursued and the social interests that lay behind them. In the Modern Age, formal education for mass participation has been institutionalized as one of the most effective vehicles for producing societal progress. Education, particularly schooling for children but also nonformal education for adults, is regarded as a human right and a principal vehicle for modernization (Simmons, 1980) and now globalization.

From the earliest sociologists to contemporary educationists, schools are considered a vital agency for socializing individuals into industrial society—adjusting to clock time from seasonal time, accepting abstract rules over religious custom, privileging rational thought over other knowledge sources, submitting to professional expert authority rather than religious authority, striking an open stance to continual change, contributing to industrial progress, and judging success by title achievement, personal wealth, and material goods. Individuals were disembedded from traditional customs and the narrow thinking of cultural communities by various institutions, including schools. Ideal modern individuals are highly mobile, educated, autonomous, cosmopolitan individuals who have put their parochial roots behind them.

Similarly, at a social level, education has been used to foster nation building, economic prosperity, citizenship capacity, and the alleviation of poverty and other social issues. In newly industrializing nations, education has been used to transform individuals by implementing modern attitudes for industrial work and consumer lifestyles as well as integrating people into modern societal institutions. Probably the most cogent, compressed example is the story told by Gustavo Esteva (1994). As a Mexican, he traced his life from childhood, before the international development agenda appeared in the 1940s, and the subsequent impact upon his identity and his community.

---

[7] Borgmann (1992) considers the modern condition to be one of sullenness, hyperactivity, aggressive realism, methodical universalism, and ambiguous individualism. These aspects of the modern condition flow from the preoccupation with prediction and control where humans predominately relate to their world as objects (1992:2).

> *As a child who was as yet not underdeveloped, I had a tradition and the dream of continuing and enriching it. I had a place in the world and concrete customs. These gave me precise orientation in my daily life. . . . I was only 13 years old when I got underdevelopment, that illusion, that kind of sickness. . . My father died a little after I got underdevelopment. This era was not for him. . . . I fully immersed myself into making the new promise a reality. Bravely, I became the first generation of students with a profession that was something like business administration. . . . I would be a pioneer of my country's struggle to develop itself. The dream was already dreamt. . . . My dreams became tinted by fantastic images of prosperity I saw at the movies made in Hollywood. I still remember clearly my fascination with the first mall, created by Sears and Roebuck a few blocks from my middle class home. The old department stores, established by the French a century before, were left immediately obsolete. Our tianguis and traditional markets became dirty, incoherent, chaotic. The market of Oaxaca suddenly became a cherished, folkloric curiosity. I still respected and loved the world of my grandmother. But clearly I did not want it for myself or my offspring; nor for my country. My nation and people desperately needed to be "developed"—and I wanted to be part of that epic venture. For that purpose, I could not appeal to my customs, to my experiences, to my traditions. Only expert's advice, education and professional handbooks could help. I came under a system of permanent education. Everything I was learning in the school or in my jobs was rapidly becoming obsolete. If I wanted to keep the pace of development, run and win, to fulfill my duty to myself, family and country, I should learn as fast as possible. . . . The culturally diverse imaginations and dreams of different peoples, full of energy only a few years before, were progressively dismantled and reduced to the illusion of soon possessing, with development aid, the American way of life. . . . By accepting the economic definition of learning, we embraced scarcities of teachers and schools. . . . [The] story is precisely a story of loss, the story of real, living men and women who became, through the experience of development, uprooted living dead. (2-6)*

This process of modernizing a nation through the vehicle of primary and professional education has been repeated for several centuries around the world. Year by year, the profound losses of cultural heterogenity, social cohesion, environmental integrity, and economic self-sufficiency press in on us.

Once industrialized, education has been used to perpetuate modern attitudes and institutions. For instance, when we juxtapose Esteva's (1994) experience with the current rallying cries of business leaders, educators, and technocrats around us, it is not so different. Education for global competitiveness, technological progress, human resource development, organizational change, and personal self-development are heralded as necessary and urgent. As former U.S. President Bill Clinton proclaimed, "What we earn depends on what we learn" (Tye & Tye, 1992: xi)—perpetuating the focus of education on economic growth and consumptive lifestyles.

The ideal modern individual and the ideal modern society are now in question. Despite the material gains for Northern countries, the Modern Age has created complex environmental, economic, social, and political crises that circumvent the globe. The heritage of transformative education has remained alive within industrialized nations to continuously challenge these structural conditions. Rick Arnold and Bev Burke (1991) summarized the face of transformative education in industrialized nations:

> *Traditional education is about transferring information that will reproduce values, knowledge, skills, discipline, and occupational capacities that will in turn maintain the present order of society and satisfy people's interest to "fit-in."*
>
> *Social change educators, on the other hand, see education as a way to help people critically evaluate and understand themselves and the world around them, to see themselves as active participants in the world. Our hopes for social transformation are ignited as people come to see themselves as creators of culture, history, and an alternative social vision.*
>
> *In our practice we assume that we have something to share with learners and participants about how to critically analyze the social system. At the same time we acknowledge our own positions in society and the ways that existing social arrangements limit our achievements and aspirations. (151)*

Critical transformative learning acknowledges the power of large societal structures but also honors the agency people have for changing their reality. As Paulo Freire (1985), Arnove and Dewee (1991), and Vilas (1986) asserted, education ought to be a cultural practice for freedom. Education is explicitly political by either perpetuating or transforming unjust structures of power and privilege. The call for radical transformation has many dimensions in the literature:

- psychological transformation to free oneself from social conventions, self-deceptions, repression, and denial;
- social and political transformation from the systems of power vested in bureaucratic, patriarchal, hierarchical, and authoritarian structures;

- economic transformation from an industrial, materialist, exploitative, environmentally destructive, and globally homogenizing world order;
- cultural transformation from myopic ethnocentric, androcentric, and anthropocentric views, and
- intellectual transformation from traditions that inadvertently mask power, violence, and subordination and now from the tyranny of wholes and absolutes—especially of metanarratives, comprehensive explanations, and objective "facts."

Nonformal transformative education, outside of formal educational structures, has been located primarily in social movements and community development initiatives. Yet, as the middle class has expanded through union gains and the rise of professionalization, analyzing society by class differences has broadened to consider various differences, particularly by gender and race, but also by sexual preference and physical ability. These new social movements (NSMs)[8] are considered privileged sites for emancipatory praxis (Welton, 1993). Yet, a decade of practice within a new social movement, informed by these ideals and learning principles, led to my disillusionment and the insistent questions that formed this study.

DISILLUSIONMENT OF AN EDUCATOR: THE PERSONAL CONTEXT

Once you wake up, can you wake up any more? (Monk Kidd, 1996:1)

My Practice as a Social Movement Educator

Between 1988 and 1994, the ground beneath my feet shifted and left me wondering about mirages where something solid had been. To quote Karl Marx who, for all the dogmatic and violent practices justified by his theories, begat a powerful analysis:

> *All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man[9] is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind (Marx & Engels, 1848; as cited in Borgmann, 1992: 98).*

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[8] These New Social Movements, dating from 1968, include the black civil rights movement, peace movement, environmental movement, women's movement, student movement, gay rights movement, antiracism movement and the New Age consciousness movement (Finger, 1989).

[9] In considering the issue of exclusive language in historical texts, I have changed tack and let them stand as they were written with their gendered blinders, rather than to artifically adjust them to contemporary lenses.

This prescient analysis summarizes the constant change and disembeddedness that are part of the modern era, confronting me in several ways.

From witnessing Freirean conscientization and liberation theology in Peru and then studying the power of popular adult education for creating a socialist democracy within the microstate of Nicaragua, I became an active member of the social justice movement in Canada. We were committed to acting in solidarity with the poor by engaging nonpoor[10] Canadians in an educative process for changing international development policies. This work was highly frustrating with intermittent and modest changes in public policy achieved (Lange, 1998). The seeming resistance of the nonpoor appeared to lend credence to Freire's (1987) contention that the "nonpoor don't necessarily have the dream of changing, of being transformed" (220-221). As he explained, the reality of the nonpoor is complex and the ideology so powerful that it is difficult to understand it and find ways to touch it.

The original intent of this study was to examine the ideological and material conditions of the Canadian nonpoor in a more penetrating way and to develop a process of popular adult education more powerful in this Northern middle-class context. That was the intention—an instrumentalist intent informed by an emancipatory vision. However, world and personal events challenged my implicit theoretical assumptions.

The 1989 drama of the dismantling of the Berlin Wall brick by brick and the freedom of Nelson Mandela etched in my mind the power of people to literally deconstruct the oppressive circumstances in which they find themselves. Many social commentators and academics were at a loss to explain the sudden and spontaneous actions that redrew our political and mental maps. Although there was collective rejoicing at the new possibilities that had been created, it also led to the disarray of the Left and the loss of a liberation project as previously theorized.

The most disheartening irony for me, personally, was the defeat of the Sandinista government by the very democracy for which Nicaraguans had fought so hard and for which so many had died. The power of "low intensity" military and economic warfare against the fledgling democracy eventually erased most of the gains of the revolution. Nicaragua has returned to the odious distinction of being one of the most impoverished of Central American countries. The power of ideology and economics mocked my innocence regarding liberatory and utopian visions. Finally, a study tour to El Salvador in 1993 to develop solidarity between a Canadian and Salvadoran community chastised my certainty in democratic collectivism. Individualism and competitiveness threatened the life of many Salvadoran co-operative efforts, and Canadians had difficulty understanding what Salvadorans meant by solidarity. Thus began a long journey—a journey from idealism to a careful hope—tempered by the power of global systems, intransigent structures, and human foibles.

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[10] I use the term *nonpoor* here rather than *middle class* to mean those who do not own or control the means of production in society but who as a group have low infant mortality, high life expectancy and enough income to be above the "poverty line," as defined by the dominant political and economic institutions. Further into the study I define middle class more explicitly for the educative and research purposes of this study.

Rethinking My Practice

I was involved with the Ecumenical Coalitions for Social Justice[11] for over 10 years, for it provided the space to freely enact critical transformative adult education and be part of a dynamic social movement with fruitful intercontinental connections. [12] Radicalized by the "Third World" liberation movements and utilizing the praxis of the Latin Americans specifically, we felt ourselves participating in "the struggle" as a concrete manifestation of our "option for the poor." Profoundly influenced by the voices from the South, particularly Christian voices from partner Churches, priority was given to their stories of exploitation and oppression, to the social analyses they provided, and to their requests for action (Beaudin, 1994).

Many educators in the Justice Coalitions drew on a Freirean dialogical approach and a liberation theology that included hearing local and global stories, demystifying power structures, engaging in collective social analysis, reflecting theologically, and taking social action. This educational work was for the purpose of catalyzing solidarity between the poor and nonpoor and for impacting the public policy decisions of government. Although modest changes in national public policy were achieved in some instances, many educators experienced either a benign neglect or resistance at the local community level. It was clear that we were not reaching Canadians in a way that resonated deeply and evoked an authentic "justice not charity" response.

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[11] These coalitions were organized by five Canadian Christian churches as part of the Canadian Council of Churches almost thirty years ago.

[12] See article Fragmented Ethics of Justice: Freire, Liberation Theology and Pedagogies for the Non-Poor in *Convergence* (1998, 1/2), the celebratory issue dedicated to Paulo Freire upon his death.

Workshops and forums held in various church communities sparked interest and increased awareness, but just as likely resulted in polite debates regarding the illegitimacy and political sympathies of alternative information sources. For those involved in monthly meetings, inconsistent attendance and personal busyness made any sequenced learning process difficult. Although important, these kinds of groups often went no further than letter-writing to politicians or corporate leaders. Lifestyle changes that would challenge economic structures or direct political action were rare.

In retrospect, we, along with a host of NGOs[13] during the last 30 years, provided the organizational infrastructure for state-regulated development at a time when Canada was more prosperous and ideologically committed to social equity. We did not see the legitimating function that the Justice Coalitions, the churches, and other NGOs played for the social welfare state. Our educational work helped to assuage public and church consciences, but it blocked or mediated structural change in a domesticating way. Out of our honourable intention to act in solidarity and by privileging the analyses and language of the South, we engaged in a reverse dependency on Latin America.

Our ideological critique was constrained by this reliance on the Latin American symbolic systems that had little resonance with the nonpoor in Canada. The conceptual constructs of oppression, repression, exploitation, liberation, solidarity, poverty, and social justice did not resonate with middle-class reality. In reading Charles Taylor (1989), we should have expected this lack of resonance, as no one normative framework forms the horizon for contemporary Western society. Neither was there a significant revolutionary radical tradition in this country as there was in Latin America, where we could build upon social ferment and popular resistance (Mayo, 1999). In an individualistic society lacking a cohesive normative system, the call for *social* justice and solidarity in response to oppression and exploitation fell largely on barren ground,[14] even in the churches, where a common spiritual horizon has faded.

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[13] Nongovernmental organizations.

We avoided a more penetrating look at the alienated beliefs and behaviours produced in our own social structures—the idolatries and addictions of wealth, security, comfort, progress, production, consumption, style, success, individualism, efficiency, achievement, and competitiveness. We did not deconstruct the web of Enlightenment concepts that were implicit in our education work—that societies are makeable; that the goal of emancipation is universal; that critical, rational, dualistic thought is the only legitimate knowledge; and that human society is the epicenter of the Earth's biosphere. An impasse in critical theory had been reached upon which we also floundered. Finally, we were not very good at reconstructing the normative resources needed to reinvent new forms of community, work, trade, production, learning, health, governance, and spirituality. The vengeance of neoliberal ideology that eventually cut the financial ground from under many NGOs necessitates this kind of analysis.

For this study, understanding the tension between the power of what is and the uncertainty of what could be was a first step in orienting to the questions that were presenting themselves (Aoki, 1992). Hans-Georg Gadamer (1995) expressed well my experience.

> *Hence we say that a question too "occurs" to us, that it "arises" or "presents itself" more than that we raise it or present it. We have already seen that, logically considered, the negativity of experience implies a question. In fact we have experiences when we are shocked by things that do not accord with our expectations. Thus questioning too is more a passion that an action. A question presses itself on us; we can no longer avoid it and persist in our accustomed opinion . . . Deciding the question is the path to knowledge. (366, 364)*

Questions pressed in on me, as did the desire to make meaning of these historical events for reorienting my practice as an educator. My old horizons were "broken open" by questions through which I needed to live. It required, as Gadamer suggested, the willingness to "know that one does not know" and to assume the "structure of openness" so that something new can be revealed (362-363). This hermeneutic orientation, then, is what has guided this study.

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[14] Social justice from a faith stance is rooted in three affirmations: 1. the inviolable dignity of the human person created in the image of the Divine, 2. the essential social nature of human beings realized in community, and 3. the belief that the abundance of nature and of social living is given by the Divine for *all* people (Lebacqz, 1986). *Social* justice therefore connotes social responsibility for the "common good" under the assumption that the common good can be determined.

Looking for Pedagogical Openings

While teaching in a university extension program from 1996, I faced participants who had either lost their jobs, would be losing their jobs imminently, had left their jobs, or had their workloads doubled. I began to trace the human impact of restructured work within a neoliberal global economy. The participants clearly made connections between their experiences and factors such as significant public/corporate sector cutbacks, restructuring, information/technological overload, job insecurity, forced self-development for marketability, and ethical conflicts at the work site. The intensity and pace of all these changes contributed to feelings of being "exhausted, alienated, isolated, disconnected, pressured, depressed, stressed, and angry." Many felt that they had "sacrificed their self, their relationships, and their personal and family well-being for work." From this realization emerged a "longing for soul and getting back to basic values."

When I presented the differences between the globalization path and the sustainability path, the participants embraced it, hungry for more. Many wished to make a transition to different work—work that would be life-giving rather than depleting. I began to search for literature and feasible alternatives that could speak to them. Additional possibilities began to emerge from the postdevelopment and sustainability literatures. The discourses were varied and uncomfortable in their broad alliances, yet there were common principles with potential for an educative process.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study, then, was to assess a learning process that attempted to engage adults in transforming their working and living habits toward ecological rather than industrial principles. A review of the literature revealed that this required attention to the very nature of modern thinking. A modern way of thinking traditionally looks for a recipe and methods of control rather than mystery and signposts. Therefore, Chapter Two traces the assumptions of the Enlightenment and their extension into postmodernism. In particular, it discusses a scientific epistemology, mechanist cosmology, anthropocentric humanist morality, autonomous individualist ontology, industrial/technological utopianism, instrumental efficiency, and bureaucratic organization. It also traces counter assumptions from the romantic movement, living systems theory, and various forms of postmodernism. Most important, it considers how these enlightenment assumptions are present in contemporary transformative education theory.

Chapter Three proposes moving beyond the fragmentary thinking that characterizes the Modern Age. By drawing on David Bohm (1980) and the New Physics, a nonfragmentary way of thinking is utilized, initially in the consideration of the research methodology. Action research was utilized in this study as it allows for study of how reflection changes practical action and has a natural affinity with critical transformative learning. The chapter first examines the history, theory, and practice of action research and then offers ten theoretical and methodological propositions upon which the study rests. The study departs from several key premises of critical transformative learning. First, it is situated among the middle class as it was expected that there were sufficient conditions among the middle class for them to challenge and transform the cultural patterns and economic structures shaping their lives. Second, a hermeneutics of suspicion was dialectically related to a hermeneutics of trust in which trust is placed in the intuitions of ordinary people that "something is deeply wrong" and in their desire to do "the good" (Taylor, 1989). Third, the research was designed on the awareness of the "linear and controlling connotations" (Schapiro, 1995: 31) of learning toward a specific utopian end-point and the relation of power therein. The intention was to "allow things to take their own course rather than bend that consciousness" through creating a space for imagination and interaction with new norms. Fourth, it attempted to bridge the gap between understanding and action by sculpting images of social possibilities and bringing the participants into contact with those who had already transformed their living and working. For instance, new habits of living and working on ecological principles by individuals and their families were considered social action. Fifth, it was expected that collective action would be encouraged when social movements are not experienced as closed, confrontational, and dogmatic but as open, pedagogical, and hope-full.

Chapter Four describes the study design, including the unique double spiral action research model developed for the study. It begins with an analysis of the material conditions in Alberta, Canada, during 1996-1998 and proceeds into a thematic investigation undertaken over a two-year period. This thematic investigation and an exploration of content ideas from sustainability discourse comprised the initial stage of action research—immersion and problem posing. From this, the first action step was the development of a course entitled "Transforming Working and Living" using transformative learning and action research principles.

Chapter Five describes the second action step of "enacting and observing the study." This course, offered through the Faculty of Extension, was self-selected by 14 participants on the basis of the course publicity that incorporated trigger words from the thematic investigation. The 14 participants who responded to the course publicity represented a range of ages, personal/family incomes, types of work, and ethnic backgrounds, and were predominately women. They were all defined as middle class in considering economic and cultural capital. This chapter then describes the involvement of the participants in their own immersion and problem-posing process. The first interview also indicated the need for a pedagogical reversal and iterative learning process.

For purposes of this study, the notion of *research* in action research was the group investigation of how cultural systems and economic structures condition the way we work and live as middle-class North America. The notion of *action* in action research was how participants responded to their research and reflection. Additional tasks of the formal researcher were investigating the meaning making of the participants, the normative and cognitive resources of the participants, and an assessment of the social transformative power of participant responses. In sum, the design integrated transformative learning, collaborative action research, and critical hermeneutics (Gallagher, 1992).

Chapter Five also traces the difficulties in the reflection on and interpretation of data. Data gathering occurred through pre-, mid-, and postinterviews, pre- and postsurveys, and participant journals. Three stages of data analysis were undertaken, including an initial description, a secondary phenomenological interpretation, and a critical hermeneutic process to carry out an ethical analysis as well as an structural analysis of mechanism. This chapter closes by considering the criterion used for the data analysis.

Chapters Six and Seven summarize the findings from the precourse interviews that revealed significant pedagogical entry points from the concerns of the participants.

Chapter Six describes the condition of disillusionment and then challenges the understanding that this is the midlife development task of seeking authenticity and integration. The participants did describe the narrowness of the white picket fence image of family, the emptiness of material acquisitions, the overimportance of work for deriving identity and success, and the hypocrisy of political and religious institutions that all undermined the illusions they held as part of the cultural and personal scripts they were living out. Yet, a vital aspect of disillusionment, particularly in relation to work, was the increasing loss of space to speak or act ethically in their worksites, whether in accord with their professional or personal ethics or not. Most participants understood their worksites as the primary vehicle for "making a difference" in society, or rather for their civic responsibility. Therefore, they had projected their ethical horizons and identity as moral beings into their profession or position. There was no uncertainty about their moral and ethical horizons, but the illusion was the sense of moral and ethical efficacy within their work structure.

Chapter Seven discusses the condition of deepening fragmentation, best described by one participant as "whirling dervishes" of constant, vigorous, and hypnotic motion. Most participants reported working simultaneously on several tasks with no sense of completion, isolated tasks without any connected purpose or predictability, constant interruptions of space and need for "sudden" responses, dispersal of energy in too many directions, and balancing competing responsibilities at the job and between the job and home. Most of the participants discussed the lack of energy "to maintain the life structure that I've created," and many of them described the condition of burnout, including serious illness over the last five years. Participants also described feeling torn apart by all their relational responsibilities. It is clear that fragmentation is not just cognitive but visceral and is carried in the body, sapping energy, reducing productivity, diminishing meaning, and dispersing focus. This chapter ends with a description of the participants' intuitions of wholeness—a hunger to see their work produce something meaningful, their ethics to be valued, their contributions to create a better society recognized, and their way of living rooted in an inner peace and outer harmony.

Chapter Eight concludes that the experiences of disillusionment and fragmentation led people to a life crossroad requiring important decisions. This complex of factors can be considered as constituting a transformative opportunity that brought them to the course on transforming working and living. Through the interweaving of six narratives, Chapter Eight traces the experiences of the participants during the course and the role of transformative learning processes in mediating their transformative opportunities. Dimensions of their journey include retelling the stories of their lives, witnessing new stories, heightened anxiety, facing fear, transforming cultural messages, clarifying life purpose, inner nourishment, archetypal reconnections, and walking a new road.

Chapter Nine first carries out an ethical analysis that describes the conflicting web of ethics in which the participants were caught, particularly in their workplaces, but also in the culture at large. Each of them was living the contradictions of modern/postmodern society, and each of them was able to identify and address these contradictions. An analysis of the participants' understandings of disillusionment revealed that their sense of ethical space was compromised in six ways. First, those who hold a service ethic toward society are blocked by bureaucracies organized by rationalism, mechanistic coordination, and personal detachment. Second, this sense of service was also compromised by increasing organizational politics and/or the business of profits—utility ethics. Third, many participants experienced a disjuncture between viewing humans (their colleagues) as having intrinsic dignity or viewing humans as having instrumental usefulness—where they are used to achieve a goal outside of themselves and where people can be bought and replaced as tools. Fourth, many workers, from managers to support staff, are now expected to adopt a utilitarian ethic that focuses on cost-benefit efficiency analyses rather than the liberal goals of equality, justice (fairness), and democracy. Fifth, some participants talked about the organization "owning their soul," where, to receive a paycheque and professional identity, people gave over their ethical autonomy and personal identity to the collective ethics and identity of the organization—the property contract ethics of a market society. In sum, this first set of findings on adult disillusionment or "losing one's illusions" was considered a pedagogical entry point.

Second, Chapter Nine carries out a structural analysis of mechanism in the lives of the participants as it was manifested in their time, space, body, and relations. An analysis of the participants' description of fragmentation revealed three faces. One face is of fragmentation as an essential component of the new business ideology, but where restructuring and cutbacks had an opposite impact by withdrawing autonomy, increasing scrutiny, and reducing efficiency, productivity, and creativity. The participants' need for security made them more malleable and less likely to critique. A second face of fragmentation is the increased volume and accelerated flow of activity in every aspect of society. Time is *the* critical commodity in the information era (Rifkin, 1995), and the power of electronics and a corresponding frenetic economy is increasingly at odds with the organic needs of humans—their embodied seasonal and biological rhythms, social need for continuity, and the spiritual need for reflection and meaning. Interestingly, the need for balance was viewed mechanistically, that is, getting all the parts of the machine (their lives) timed correctly with efficient apportionments for each work task and with each loved one—mimicking electronic time. The third face of fragmentation is the cultural construction of household life in which standards of cleanliness, organization, and nutrition have escalated; where the parenting and partnering process has become the most intensive in human history; and where home technologies have inflated levels of consumption and maintenance with an illusion of comfort and convenience (Shor, 1992). These pressures at home and work mean that many are existing on the razor's edge of physical collapse. Fragmentation was another pedagogical entry point.

Third, Chapter Nine further analyzes disillusionment and fragmentation to reveal that participants have been estranged from essential ties that are life-giving for human "being." Alienation means to lose contact with or to be estranged, detached, or distanced from a part of one's life, the vital social mode of existence, and/or the natural world upon which existence most fundamentally depends. Therefore the experiences of disillusionment and fragmentation were considered to constitute a condition of alienation. Specifically, these participants were experiencing an intensified severing of their organic relationship to time, space, their body, and human relations. This severance has been encouraged by the rationalization, bureaucratization, and intensification of work; compartmentalization of social roles; instrumentalized and propertied human relations; the microchip revolution; and the consumptive acquisitive society. It has been augmented by a deep cultural notion of scarcity that fuels insecurity, grasping, and competitiveness.

This condition of alienation, then, is a diminished existence both individually and socially.

The participants described that they were looking deeper, beyond epistemological or efficiency prescriptions. They also intuited that they needed to make choices among the conflicting ethics of modernity that rage within them (Taylor, 1989). From these descriptions, this search was analyzed in two ways: first, as the search for broader moral and ethical horizons out of which to judge aspects of their lives and in which to end the warring between ethics and cultural scripts—an ontological coherence. Second, the search for balance is the search inward, toward the depths of being, and beyond, toward a larger cosmological horizon in which to locate their lives historically—a cosmological coherence expanding concepts of time and reality. David Bohm (1980) suggested that the words used by the participants—health, whole, and holy—are related etymologically, illustrating the deepest human urges toward wholeness and integrity.

Finally, Chapter Ten describes two related processes within transformative learning—those of restorative learning and transformative learning. Restorative learning, not considered in existing transformation theory, includes providing ethical sanctuary for learners and restoring their radical relatedness. Transformative learning, in this learning context, involved widening the horizons of the participants by transforming cultural patterns of living and working. It also involved what Fromm (1976) called the shift from the "mode of having," including consuming and grasping, to the "mode of being" (1) or relatedness. The study concludes that transformative learning must be dialectically related to restorative learning, given the present material conditions. Learners require restorative learning to animate their ethical autonomy and coherence. It is proposed that these dynamics can be considered as holding the potential for revitalizing citizen action. The chapter attempts to take transformative learning theorizing beyond modernist notions in these ways. It ends by applying the four dynamics of restorative and transformative learning to the transformation of work.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is about living transformation. It is a story about the process of living through a personal transformation, but also about living within a time of epochal transformation. This time of transformation has any number of trajectories but this study opts to explore thinking, working, and living patterns that can contribute to sustaining life on Earth. Most specifically, it is about what living means—for us as individuals, as human communities, and as a community of species on Earth. For this reason, this study has general relevance for individuals, communities, social movements, professional organizations, and business. However, it also has particular relevance for sociologists, adult educators, and action researchers.

The study is significant as it challenges existing understandings of "citizen malaise" that is purported to comprise the crisis of democracy. The participants within this study were deeply concerned about the social and environmental issues in their society, but interlocking factors in their lives constrained the ability to act. The first area of constraint is the lack of public spaces in which to reflect on conflicting ethics, particularly in the workplace, but also in the culture at large. When individuals invest their ethical horizons and social responsibilities into a bureaucratic workplace implicitly structured to prevent full democracy, they lack the autonomy to speak and act without impunity. This can be termed a *culture of silence* (Freire, 1970: 97), in which employees remain silent in order to keep their jobs, or they try to find another job without ever addressing the root issues of economic democracy, conflicting workplace ethics, and industrial models of work.

Therefore, ongoing efforts at organizational change in business will continue to be superficial and manipulative unless these root issues are considered. Adult educators, unions, and professional organizations have a role to play in providing ethical sanctuary where these issues can be raised and reflected upon safely. The implication for business is to develop associations that have a sense of vocation to society and establish a larger ethical horizon for themselves.

With the intensification of work, employees often eliminate other avenues for enacting their social responsibility. There is little time at the end of the day or week to be involved in volunteer activities. Similarly, the hopeless image of the crises perpetuated by the dominant media and the confrontational image of social movements create a sense of futility and do not present constructive options for substantive change. Social movements and adult educators need to consider bringing citizens into contact with thriving alternatives that are enjoyable and participatory and with mentors that are contributing to constructive social change. Creating the future is as important as resistance.

Simultaneous is the need to break through the interlocking ideologies of security as money, consumption as success, the Protestant work ethic, work as identity and status, and the comfort of consumption. When the negative social and personal impacts of these ideologies are penetrated, more imaginative and sustainable options for living and working are available that can revitalize citizen action. Again, unions, professional organizations, social movements, and adult educators have an educative role to play.

Finally, this study is significant for its reconceptualization of transformative learning, redesign of action research methodology, and redefinition of work.

CHAPTER TWO

THE MODERN CONDITION AND EDUCATION: A REVIEW

Everyone sees the need of a new principle of life. But as always happens in similar crises—some people attempt to save the situation by an artificial intensification of the very principle which has led to decay. (Ortega; as cited in Barber, 1992: 62)

EXISTENTIAL QUESTIONS AND EPOCHAL CHANGE

This study of social and personal transformation is positioned within the much broader context of the four epochal transformations that comprise Western history—the Neolithic, Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. At this millennial turn, the Modern Age has been under scrutiny for its failings but also, for some, its redemption. Although many have attempted to understand the mechanisms of social change, the dynamics remain as elusive as ever, as the fall of the Berlin Wall emphasized. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the continuity throughout the last three epochs has been the following existential questions:

- What is existence, and therefore what is life and death?
- What is reality, and therefore what is real and what is illusion or abstraction?
- How did the universe come about, and what is our place in it as humans?
- What does it mean to be human, and therefore what is consciousness, how do we regard what is not human, and what is the good life?
- How should we live together, and therefore what is a good society? and
- How can we come to knowledge about these questions?

It is the complex interplay between whether these questions are asked, how the questions are framed, and what the various answers are that has shaped the thinking within each epoch.

It is also clear that change does not occur by questions and ideas alone. It is the interaction between ideas and material practices that shape the daily habits of an epoch. Hegelian dialectical analysis[15] suggests that human reality is not just what can be observed empirically, but it is the entire material and spiritual culture of humanity (Horkheimer, 1931; as cited in Kellner, 1990). It includes individual consciousness (attitudes, hopes, beliefs, and values); social consciousness (shared cultural concepts held within society, including the notion of society itself); and material interests, practices, and artifacts. In other words, ideas and practices shape and are shaped by each other while situated within specific historical conditions. Weber (1946) explained it best: "Not ideas, but material and ideal interests, directly govern men's conduct. Yet very frequently the 'world images' that have been created by 'ideas' have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest" (280).

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[15] Marx used dialectical materialist analysis to identify the internal material contradictions that create an ongoing source of tension and eventually catalyze a crisis whereby the contradictions are resolved through synthetic change to a new social form. However, the impetus for studies undertaken by the Frankfurt Critical School, such as by Horkheimer and Adorno ([1947] 1972), was that crisis is by no means inevitable and that change is not driven by economic structures primarily but also by cultural processes.

These world images can be said to contain archetypes which have a power beyond individual consciousness and the interests embedded in social structures. Therefore, my approach is critical of materialist analyses that focus on the economic realm as the primary determining factor of social change (as Marx and Engels themselves criticized). It is also critical of idealist analyses (as framed by Kant and Hegel) in which reality is only what individuals think about it and therefore where knowledge is only subjective mental constructs grounded in the experience of the individual. Although materialism and idealism have been held in opposition to each other, this is an example of fragmented thinking characteristic of modernism. This study, then, will consider both material and ideational constructions as vital elements in social change, elements that are internally related and ought not to be artificially abstracted as separated spheres interacting on each other (Sayer, 1987: 19).[16] With this understanding of social change, I contend that the existing theory and practice of transformative learning is founded on various Enlightenment assumptions and shares the fragmented thinking and practices that characterize both the dominant and the counter movements within the Modern Age.[17]

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[16] Sayer asserts that reality cannot be conceived of as separate spheres interacting or corresponding to each other, but that they are internally related. As Marx himself suggested, they are embedded in each other. "Production by an isolated individual outside society. . . is as much of an absurdity as is the development of language without individuals living together and talking to each other" (Marx, 1857:84; cited in Sayer, 1987:19).

[17] This dialectical analysis of social change is not considered in opposition to but as subsuming other social change analyses - such as the notion of cyclical change (elaborated by Toynbee in the cycles of rise, decline and fall) , immanent change (elaborated by Sorokin where some cultural elements become overdeveloped and precipitate change), successive evolution (elaborated by Spencer and Rostow as movement to a more developed and complex adaptation), and diffusion (elaborated by Tylor where cultural knowledge and practices spread from one culture to another). Drawing from some of these analyses, the crisis of the Modern Age can be considered as the overdevelopment of some ideas and material practices resulting in the rise of conflicting ideas. Currently, it is this amplification of certain

ENLIGHTENMENT ASSUMPTIONS AND POSTMODERNISMS

Change, including transformative change, is central to modern thinking. Change within modernism implies both the nonacceptance of what has gone before and the unfettered faith that change is betterment. This "progressivism" is the belief that the human condition continually progresses toward increasingly optimal states, as the past is continually improved upon. Transformative change is most often considered as the most progressive, for it is the most radical, complete form of change, and for this reason has been embraced as an important part of the modern project.

Originally, the transformation of society meant moving toward ideal states such as liberation, equality, or a prosperous society. Yet in current times, the thinking about transformative change has become unhinged from these more lofty societal goals and hinged to more pragmatic goals, such as corporate profitability and organizational effectiveness. To understand the underpinnings of transformative change literature, the section below identifies some assumptions within modern forms of thinking, and the following section illustrates how they permeate the literature on adult transformative learning.

Dismantling the Sacred for a Scientific Epistemology

The Enlightenment scientists and *philosophes* considered themselves as having made a quantum leap in human knowledge that reached new heights of possibility for freedom. The superiority of the Enlightenment over all previous epochs was believed to be the superiority of science in conquering dogma and superstition as well as eliminate corrupt despotism and exploitation. Freedom would be won from nature, from oppressive structures, from Church authority, and from all primitive and traditional myths. A defining aspect of being a modern was a tough-minded skepticism (Tarnas, 1991).

Hence, one central axis of the Enlightenment was epistemological—a new way of knowing—that intertwined with a new cosmology and ontology. To be modern was to seek human liberation through the active engagement of reason, not through the primordial unitive consciousness of the Pre-Ancients, the metaphysical illumination of

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elements to their logical conclusion that has led to a foundational critique of modernism by postmodernists of all variants and the sense of increasing cultural chaos, often associated with epochal decline and fall.

the Ancients, or the Divine salvific plan of the Medievals. These previous epistemological systems were naïve speculations arrived at through rationality would provide the basis for action "untainted by emotions, sensate knowledge, social constructions, and noncognitive awareness" (Spretnak, 1999: 220). With Descartes, the prominence of the soul gave way to the prominence of the mind, and the faculty of human reason was enthroned as the key to enlightenment and the progression of human history.

Descartes understood every form in the universe as containing a geometric or mechanical structure—from the movement of the planets to the human body and mind—all moving in mathematically determined patterns. To arrive at certain knowledge of these patterns of reality, Descartes urged the use of a deductive method to discover natural laws via the reasoned logic of mathematics. This new method of rational analytic thinking employed reductionism where the behaviour of the smaller component parts was generalized to the whole. Descartes felt that no certainty could be established without reasoning from self-evident propositions; hence the formula, "Cogito, ergo sum"—"I think, therefore I am." The principles from which all other knowledge is deduced exist first in the thinking mind. In this way, self-consciousness or awareness was considered the greatest achievement of our species that raises us above all other species (Suzuki, 1997).

In the Cartesian world, then, there are no hidden powers, final causes, virtues, or essences by which living things unfold to live out their purpose. In contrast to such an Aristotelian teleological view, the material world does not have an unseen spiritual side that influences the natural or human world. Only free will bestowed by God exempted the human mind from the clock-like mechanical determinism of the material world. All other matter was considered dead, for it is mindless, feelingless, and soulless. The mind was the source of freedom for humans. Thus, the universe became comprised of two different realms—mind and matter—rather than spirit and matter.

Declaring war on death and the vagaries of natural forces, Francis Bacon urged the reorganization of scientific and philosophic pursuits to gain control of the thinking form that could command and subjugate the natural world and enlighten human character. Bacon proposed an inductive study of nature through experience, observation, and experiment rather than through theoretical logic of the Ancients. This empirical scientific method combined the logical, the experimental, and the mathematical. These powerful tools enabled Copernicus to reconstruct the heavens and Newton to propose the clockwork universe. An objectivist view saw reality as containing a rational structure where its properties could be discovered through correct reasoning, independent of culture or other factors residing within the scientific mind (Spretnak, 1999). Increasingly, it would be secular science that commanded a growing allegiance, for it appeared to offer certainty of universally valid and neutral belief systems. This "foundationalism" dominated scientific endeavour for 400 years, begetting scientism—the belief that science is no longer only *one* form of knowledge, but *the* form of knowledge and the only mode of truth.

A Mechanist Cosmology

The second axis of the Enlightenment, a mechanist cosmology, broke the continuous spiritual chain of being. The middle position of humans between the Earth world and spirit world in the Christian drama of sin and salvation was dislocated from its central position. Reason, not revelation, would come to dominate religion as much as every other sphere of life. Bacon, Descartes, and Newton assumed the existence of God, but a God who was the master mechanic behind the clockwork universe and whose power was restricted to occasionally correcting the mechanisms. It was a short fall for religion—from God as the source of absolute knowledge to the master mechanic God and eventually to the passive, inert God. The *philosophes* led by Voltaire proposed a Deist understanding of a rational God overseeing but not interfering with an orderly creation. Furthering this line of thought, Hume asserted the inability to prove any metaphysical reality such as God at all. Engaging in a ruthless, secular skepticism, Hume asserted that no one could claim the rational certainty of God, the immortality of the soul, or any other metaphysical claim outside of concrete experience. God could not be known through self-evident intuition, causal reasoning, or any empirical evidence, even the structure of the natural world as a manifestation of God.

Immanuel Kant acknowledged Hume's thinking that transcendent reality could not be known, but he wished to preserve a foundation for moral and ethical thinking. He thus asserted that although God may not be knowable, God was thinkable and gave expression to inner moral duty. In this sense, Kant, Durkheim, and others would uphold the utilitarian function of religion for providing a moral-ethical framework for society. Extending these views, theorists such as Marx would then claim that religious conviction is absurd and a needy projection of dependent, unliberated humans. Religion was an "opiate of the people" promulgated by the bourgeois Church for social control. Religion would be unnecessary if people broke their chains of illusion and worked to transform the world to realize justice and full human community. Culminating all these views at the end of the 19th century, then, was Nietzsche's proclamation that "God is dead," the disenchantment complete.

With these epistemological and cosmological transformations, the sacred was dismantled—through Cartesian rationalism and Baconian/Newtonian empiricism—coalescing into a scientism exploring a mechanist, lifeless cosmos devoid of spirit. As theologian Rosemary Ruether (1992) aptly summarized, the Cartesian separation of the immortal soul from the mortal body was only a few steps from the independent human mind, above the world able to know and rule it, to transform it at will: "Soon, the presupposition of God could itself be discarded, leaving the scientists together with the rulers of state and industry, in charge of passive matter, infinitely reconstructible to serve their interests" (197).

The reconstructibility project applied to the natural world, the body, nations, societies, and individual citizens. For instance, the natural world could be tamed and reengineered toward predictability. As industrial technology has undermined the abundance of the natural world, so now technology is used to artificially reproduce this abundance in fully controlled environments—from vat-grown food products to cloned animals—accessible only through the market. The body could be reconstructed in numerous ways too, from external molding and grooming to biomedical repairs reliant on surgical knife and pill. Ancient peoples could be reconstituted through nation states. Societies could be redeveloped through industrial modernization and rationally designed institutions that dissolved the binds to place, community, extended family, and tradition. Individuals could be transformed through behaviourist motivational strategies and ideologies promising freedom in the city, in waged or salaried jobs, in romantic love, in the nuclear family, and in conspicuous consumption. Charlene Spretnak (1999) called these assumptions the *ideologies of denial*—which profoundly deny the knowing body, the creative cosmos, and the complex sense of place.

An Anthropocentric Humanist Morality

The third key axis of the Enlightenment is an anthropocentric humanist morality. In various ways, rationalism and empiricism were at odds, vying for ascendancy. Kant wished to save both empirical science and philosophic rationalism and thereby established a central epistemological position of modernity. He saw that Hume's critique had inadvertently undermined the very possibility of an empirical science. If the mind cannot apprehend matter independently of the organizing mechanisms of the mind, then the mind cannot truly know the nature of reality rationally or empirically. No one, including scientists, can ever stand outside their perceptions of reality, and any truth claim could be defended by logical argument.

Kant proposed that the mind comes to know *only that* which conforms to the structures of the mind. It is not the phenomenon revealing its underlying principles but the mind's organizing principles imposed on phenomena that enable the comprehension of the world. Therefore, the only certainty is the organizational structures through which the mind knows, these structures enabling both empirical observation and rational thinking. The observer then constructs his/her world by both the questions asked and the concepts used to understand the observation. Based on this constructivist position, philosophers and psychologists set out to explore the formal structure of the mind, for surely *there* was the foundation of certain knowledge.

If the world is in the mind, where does the moral ground lay? In the Ancient World, the moral ground was metaphysical reflection on the timeless essences or Ideas of Good, Beauty, Truth, and Justice. To glimpse Justice is to know justice and therefore to do justice. In the Catholic medieval world and later in the reformational thinking of Martin Luther, the moral ground lay either in right conduct according to Christian precepts or in the divine gift of grace. With the desacralization of the cosmos, the only ground for morality was the inherent virtue of humans. Kant surmised that once individuals come to know the Good rationally—once they know truth through reason—they would use their free will to do the good.

In rationalist humanism, there would be two realms of knowing (religion and science) as well as two realms of knowledge (objective fact and subjective value) (Ruether, 1992). Yet, questions of the Good would be marginalized to the realm of religion and philosophy. Science claimed ascendancy for it was the realm of fact, objectivity, and moral neutrality. For this reason, questions of morals and ethics that should have been raised within scientific processes were submerged as philosophy and religion were sidelined to the periphery of knowledge creation. "Scientific knowledge," said Tarnas (1991), "was stupendously effective, but those effects suggested that much knowledge from a limited perspective could be a very dangerous thing" (365). Max Weber (1946) pointed out that science will not and cannot help answer the questions "Which of the warring gods should we serve?" and "How shall we live our lives?" (153). Science has asserted its right *not* to answer these questions. Weber described this situation as being locked into an iron cage of technological imperative outside of any ability to rationally determine the use-value or cosmic value of research programs and technological innovation.

Religion assumes that the world must have a meaning and therefore offers a *Weltanschauung* (worldview) and sacred values to conduct one's life by (Weber, 1946). Science attempted to wipe the slate clean of any explicit worldview and sacred values, thereby raising the status of the profane—that even an idea or thing that is not beautiful, good, or holy can still be true and useful. Borgmann (1992) called this the amoral *triumph of procedure over substance*. Therefore the status of scientifically derived "truth" holds the dominant position with "scientific publications as surrogates for sacred images ascribed with mystic holiness" (Weber, 1946: 351).

The diminution of religion also provided the foundations for the "death of nature" (Merchant; as cited in Shiva, 1991) and the preeminence of anthropocentrism. Implicit in the anthropocentric belief that the human species is the central actor of the natural world and self-consciousness is the only narrative is a human chauvinism toward the rest of creation in which humans become the measure of all things and the source of all value. Enacted, it has resulted in the extinction of thousands of species and habitats—an environmental holocaust. Closely related is androcentrism—in which male humans are the central actors and women part of "all other species" which are unpredictable and needing control. These views have condoned structural violence within the very moral fabric of industrial society. Competition and power within a dominance/submission model is part of the "hypermasculine" modernity that devalues what is associated with feminine and natural principles (Eisler, 1987; Hart, 1992; Spretnak, 1999). Corresponding ethnocentric contempt is shown for all other cultures, particularly tribal and indigenous cultures, that hold "backward" notions of integration and reciprocal duties to the natural world.

A further challenge to finding moral ground was Freud's uncovering of the power of the unconscious. By engaging an atheist materialist analysis of the psyche, he challenged Kant's belief that moral virtues and the dignity of the rational mind are inherent in humans. Freud uncovered the dark side of human nature and the unreliability of the rational mind that is never free from nonrational forces and base biological instincts. He proposed that human behaviour is driven by resistance, repression, and projection—where powerful exterior forces are required to tame the ego and the id. Religion is one of those exterior forces that is necessary until psychological maturity is reached. Certain knowledge through rational means could no longer be trusted given an inner psyche beyond conscious control (Jung, 1957: 15-16). Tarnas (1991) summarized:

> *For man could no longer assume his mind's interpretation of the world to be a mirrorlike reflection of things as they actually were. The mind itself might be the alienating principle. Moreover, the insights of Freud and the depth psychologists radically increased the sense that man's thinking about the world was governed by nonrational factors that he could neither control nor be fully conscious of. (353)*

According to Richard Tarnas (1991), this line of thought has led directly to a spectrum of postmodernisms. Being bereft of any certainty regarding the ability to know the universe, the nature of reality, or even the human mind has led to the complexity of postmodern theories. Although attempting to resist generalities, postmodernism asserts reality as constantly changing and knowledge as contingent where no one thought system or research method can reveal "the truth." This indeterminacy, ambiguity, contingency, and plurality is what characterizes postmodernism. And perhaps the contribution lies in the humility that recognizes that a subject or object can never be fully known and therefore controlled. The mind is interpretive and knowledge is mediated by signs and symbols, generally manifested through language.

Most often, postmodernisms lack any firm ground for knowledge making, propose an extreme relativization of moral ground, and vigorously oppose any attempt to formulate a new integrated world view. Rather, postmodernism is an attitude of unmaking—deconstructing knowledge through a critique of critique. It can at once be nihilist in its despair and continuous self-annihilation, or it can be self-critical to the point of compulsive fragmentation and incoherent diversity. This postmodern vacuum of meaning created by the lack of a meaningful cosmology has been filled, contended Borgmann (1992), by hypermodernism, including sullen resignation, hyperactive work habits, and commodious individualism. In this way, postmodernism theory can be considered the logical extension of the postmodern condition amplified to the conclusion of groundlessness, fragmentation, incoherence, and uncertainty (Tarnas, 1991).

Derek Briton (1996), adapting H. Foster's work (1985) into adult education, distinguished postmodernism into three variants: the postmodernisms of reaction, resistance, and engagement. The postmodernisms of reaction are fundamentally neoconservative in upholding current power arrangements but critiquing the cultural impacts that have drained traditional virtues and authorities. They uphold social order and economic prosperity as the laudable societal form. The postmodernisms of resistance, to which Tarnas (1991) referred above, is the deconstruction of tradition that questions any grand narratives that continue relations of dominance, to the point of questioning reason itself. Critical postmodernisms attempt to retain the emancipatory intent while critiquing the androcentric, Eurocentric, and abstract facets embedded even in emancipatory theorizing. Utilizing the thinking of Vaclav Havel (1978; as cited in Briton, 1996), Briton suggested instead a postmodern pedagogy of engagement that moves beyond prescription, imposition, and universal systems to establish an ethical foundation for action. It is a pedagogy of hope that "lies not in directly confronting the system but in denying it in principle" (102). To this concept, we will return.

Ontology of Autonomous Individualism

> *The Enlightenment has always aimed at liberating men from fear and establishing their sovereignty. Yet the fully enlightened Earth radiates disaster triumphant. The program of the Enlightenment was the disenchantment of the world; the dissolution of myths and the substitution of knowledge for fancy. . . . The disenchantment of the world is the extirpation of animism [or more accurately animation of nature]. . . . Myth turns into enlightenment, and nature into mere objectivity. Men pay for the increase of their power with alienation from that over which they exercise their power. . . . Disqualified nature becomes the chaotic matter of mere classification, and the all-powerful self becomes mere possession—abstract identity. . . . For the Enlightenment, whatever does not conform to the rule of computation and utility is suspect. . . . Enlightenment is as totalitarian as any system; . . . men are brought to actual conformity. . . . There is to be no mystery—which means, too, no wish to reveal mystery. (Horkheimer & Adorno. ([1944] 1972: 3-24)*

The modern condition is fundamentally one of multiple alienations—cosmological, ontological, and epistemological alienation. The task of deriving a believable cosmology was granted to science. Scientists determined that the universe is a stupendous, unimaginable expanse in which humans are only irrelevant specks. Humans are simply what they make of themselves, not beings with any externally derived sense of purpose or ultimate end. The human destiny is an uncertain destiny with no point beyond physical residence on the Earth, if the evolutionary fates of previous mammal species are any indication. Together with this cosmological alienation, the epistemological alienation is rooted in the knowledge that neither philosophy, theology, nor science can claim certain knowledge in which to root apprehensions of reality. The result is that the modern epistemological condition is one of doubt and skepticism in which humans cannot transcend their physical existence or claim genuine cognition of reality.

The ontological alienation is the anguish of knowing that humans are alone in a dead universe, that they are isolated by the nature of their self-awareness. The inwardness and self-madeness of the Modern Age was foreshadowed with the soul searching of Augustine; but it was the personal angst of Augustinian monk, Martin Luther, and his reformist zeal that unwittingly paved the way for the emergence of a rebellious, self-determining, self-governing individualism. With his new creeds, "By faith alone, scripture alone and grace alone," Luther took on the Catholic doctrinal orthodoxy and monopoly. By enshrining the right of individual Scriptural exegesis, he inadvertently cracked the unified structure of Christendom. Lutheranism began as a conservative religious protest emphasizing the profound sinfulness of humans amidst God's abundant mercy. Yet, by stubbornly asserting "Here I am; I can do no other" during his refusal to recant, Luther instituted a revolutionary movement that upheld the importance of individual conscience as the prime gauge of the good and pure life. Eventually, the Christian foundation and moral rigor of this dynamic would be lost, and the primacy of private judgement over institutional authority would come to characterize modern life. The Reformation established the principles of personal autonomy and paved the way for religious pluralism that would expand into political, cultural, and ethical pluralism.

Charles Taylor (1991) described this as the loss of a coherent and unified moral and ethical horizon. Such a horizon normally binds a sense of community and provides a framework against which to derive and measure individual meaning. Modern freedom was predicated on breaking loose from these old moral horizons so that people had the right to decide for themselves their own convictions and the ways in which they would live their lives. Humans were cast as self-conscious, detached rational agents who found certainty within themselves. They "became subject; the self-conscious shaper and guarantor of all that comes to him from beyond himself" (Lovitt, 1977: xxvi; as cited in Briton, 1996: 76).

> *The problem, of course, being that "when you constitute your individual subjectivity as a self-sufficient field and a closed realm, you thereby shut yourself off from everything else and condemn yourself to the mindless solitude of the monad, buried alive and condemned to a prison cell without egress. (Jameson, 1992: 15; as cited in Briton, 1996: 77)*

With a detached subjectivity, ethical thinking was premised on a relativization of values. Freedom was freedom for individuals to determine how to be true to themselves and determine what is of ultimate value. Society itself would come to be conceived of as atomistic individuals all pursuing their own fulfillment with no greater purpose than the freedom of doing so.

Not only is the autonomous individual tasked with finding his/her own meaning, but there is also a proliferation of social spheres that have developed their own independently operating values. Compartmentalization is part of the rationalizing of modern life—split into the spheres of family life, work life, social life, political life, love life, and spiritual life. As an individual moves from sphere to sphere, he/she experiences an ethical schizophrenia where activities have no single unifying principle. This dynamic of "individualism involves a centring on the self and a concomitant shutting out, or even unawareness, of the greater issues or concerns that transcend the self, be they religious, political, historical" (Taylor, 1991: 14). With the resulting fragmentation, people are unable to effectively form a common purpose among themselves and act collectively on it, except in small single-issue groups. Therefore, the public square is empty of the passion and ideals that have a compelling force socially. Tocqueville warned that such an empty public square provides the space for increasing political oppression. John Ralston Saul (1995) called this *soft despotism*, in which democratic public debate and individual decision making are surrendered to passive acceptance of corporatist agendas.[18]

Moreover, there is a general sense of a deepening cultural malaise and alienation (Taylor, 1991) precluding meaningful action. In this age of narcissism, lonely people live for the moment and for themselves, not for their place in history or for posterity. Lasch (1979) contended that the psychological self-awareness movement signals another retreat from the public square. Paradoxically, with all the freedom for self-definition, people either turn to new modes of narcissistic conformity through market commodities (possessive individualism), become self-absorbed through dependence on all manner of psychological experts for self-realization (expressive individualism), or continue to participate in religious rituals and norms as an instrumental way to enhance self-definition (religious individualism) (Bellah et al., 1985).

Homo Economicus and Industrial/Technological Utopianism

> *By nailing a man's whole attention to the floor of his mere consumer interests, it is hoped to render him incapable of appreciating the ever-increasing degree of his spiritual, political and moral degradation (Havel, 1985: 12).*

Another impact of Martin Luther's thinking was the importance of an individual's duty in worldly affairs as the highest moral activity. No longer was monastic asceticism considered the highest form of life. This reconstitution of duty would overcome the religious disdain for worldly and economic affairs. As Max Weber (1930) has traced, the

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[18] Saul defines corporatist where legitimacy in a society lies with powerful groups, generally acting in their own group interests, not with individual citizens with the power to dissent, debate and decide as in a democratic society. To reclaim an conscious democratic society, Saul says that we need to retrieve a sense of disinterest or public good and participation. This can overcome our acquiescence to a corporatist ideology that builds on conformity, passivity and inevitability - in this case to the market rule of society.

Protestant work ethic would come to support economic acquisition as a logical end to disciplined work at a sacred vocation. The religious approval of an acquisitive spirit, along with the discouragement of consumption/encouragement of thrift, forked in the two directions. The modern era would be characterized by both the accumulation of surplus for business enterprise, leading to capitalist liberal democracies; and the levellers and diggers who stressed common ownership of land and redistribution of wealth, leading to utopian socialism and Lenin's version of a communist state.

Underlying both of these forks is the definition of human life and society as primarily an economic matter. In the ultimate ethical reversal, Adam Smith's invisible hand of competitive greed would guide each worker through their pursuit of monetary self-interest and translate into the utilitarian "most good for the highest number." Eventually, the morality of Protestant frugality was lost, and greed and consumption become the "ethical" motivators by which each individual could contribute to his/her nation's wealth production. Geographically bound communities were lost through the spread of an impersonal, abstract commercial society in which people valued mobility and casual ties over place of birth, family, religious, or community ties. Self-fulfillment and authenticity as self-truth fade as a moral demand, and consumption is propagated as individual expression and a gauge of self-fulfillment.

Underlying both of these forks is also the privileging of economic progress through the logic of industrialism. Industrialization was the route to a mature modern society in which high mass consumption is equated with universal well-being. This legitimated interventionism first as colonialism and imperialism and then as international aid and development to assist Southern nations in building stable, industrial, growth-oriented societies. Despite the notable failures of these programs, particularly the odious debt loads of many nations that provoked Structural Adjustment Plans, this ideology is now intensified through the propaganda of neoliberal globalization. The intent of the new global information economy is the application of science, technology, information, and management theory to the areas of production, trade, and consumption (Castells, 1993). Supported by the GATT, WTO, and many free-trade agreements, transnational corporations ignore national boundaries and control vast resources across the globe. The cultural homogenizing implicit in the global export of McWorld consumerism is part of the continued project of reconstructibility. The political potency of nation states declines even as they sell this agenda to their own citizens on the basis of economic growth, increased jobs, and cheaper material goods.

The industrial utopia is being transposed into a technological utopia. Prosperity, abundance, stability, although still arrived at through efficiency, productivity, and growth, are now tied to the global integration of export industries and technological advances. Spretnak (1999) summarized the internal logic of the global market as "maximum production with the fewest possible employees, at locations accepting the lowest wage-scales in the world and the weakest levels of protection of the environment and labour" (1999). Greater productivity and larger profits are all possible by replacing the labour of humans and the productivity of the natural world with technological substitutes. In describing this third great industrial revolution, Jeremy Rifkin (1995) asserted that the world's population is fast becoming polarized into "two irreconcilable and potentially warring forces" (p. xvii)—a mobile knowledge elite who control the technologies and forces of production and the low-wage service sector who with the growing numbers of permanently jobless workers, have few prospects for meaningful employment in the new high-tech global economy.

Tarnas (1991: 321) suggested that the faith in human intelligence and knowledge, the liberatory confidence in ever-progressing human development, and the movement toward a social utopia all have a source in Christianity, particularly the messianic archetype. For example, the manifest doctrine of the United States in the early 20th century as well as modernization assistance to "underdeveloped" countries as part of their moral imperative in the "fight" against chronic international poverty all had a messianic flair. Similarly, communism can be related to the archetype of the Chosen People and building "the Kingdom" to realize perfection. Today, this archetype is present in the technicist strand of empiricism which confidently heralds the future prospects of genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, and other informational technologies to deliver society from modern ills. Borgmann (1992) defined this as hypermodernism promising "a technologically sophisticated and glamorously unreal universe" (6). The shadow side, he said, is individuals running feverishly through empty hyperactivity to keep up to a technology-driven rhythm of life. Hyperactivity produces a sullenness best exemplified through paralyzed social irresponsibility and individual indifference.

Rationalities of Instrumental Efficiency and Bureaucratic Organization

Although a bureaucracy is superior in organization to any other form of organization for its efficiency, standardization, continuity, and impersonality, it is a mechanistic form of organization with little regard for people. Authority in society becomes ascribed to positions and is ordered by rules and procedures. Hence, modern societies have become habituated to routinized schedules, packaged techniques, prescriptive technologies, or efficient procedures of bureaucratized professionals who, through a narrow focus, avoid significant ethical issues. Bureaucratic organizations are havens of conformity, uniformity, and discipline.

For Charles Taylor (1991), the impact of an instrumental and bureaucratic rationality is a loss of freedom for individuals and societal groups. The structure of daily life is such that choices outside of an industrial-technological structure are severely restricted. In the face of a vast bureaucratic state and workplace, individuals feel powerless to effect change or sustain alternative ways of living. The attempt to hang onto any transcendental ethic is overwhelmed by the workplace ethics of goal-directedness and self-gain and often leads to an ethical schizophrenia (Germain, 1993: 39). Most people live as if there was no tension between the means and ends. Those who are the technical experts often become Weber's "specialists without spirit," concerned only with technical correctness and channels of command. Expertism has resulted in broad-ranging interventionism and a colonizing of our relationships with the natural world and other global communities.

Therefore, in the absence of any grounding in the sacred, our public arenas and private lives have become permeated by an instrumental rationality in which all things are calculated through cost-benefit analyses. All "things," including people, have come to be regarded as raw resources or instruments that are calculated to arrive at the most efficient, lowest input in order to gain the maximum benefit, success, or output. Instrumentalism has permeated most aspects of daily life, including family life, with an overall loss of social vision and cosmic purpose.

COUNTER ASSUMPTIONS TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT

> *The unity of the primitive image of the world, in which everything was concrete magic, has tended to split into rational cognition and mastery of nature, on the one hand, and into "mystic" experiences, on the other. The inexpressible contents of such experiences remain the only possible "beyond," added to the mechanism of a world robbed of gods. In fact, the beyond remains an incorporeal and metaphysical realm in which individuals intimately possess the holy. . . . Precisely the ultimate and most sublime values have retreated from public life. . . . It is not accidental that our greatest art is intimate and not monumental, nor is it accidental that today only within the smallest and intimate circles . . . [is] something pulsating that corresponds to the prophetic pneuma, which in former times swept through the great communities like a firebrand, welding them together. (Weber, 1946: 282, 155)*

Since the advent of the Modern Age, contrarian thinking has contested the primary enlightenment assumptions of rationalism, empiricism, mechanism, scientism, anthropocentric humanism, autonomous individualism, industrial/technological utopianism, instrumentalism, and bureaucratic expertism. As the oft-quoted John Donne (as cited in Borgmann, 1992; Suzuki, 1997) lamented at the outset of modernism:

> *The new Philosophy calls all in doubt,*
> *The Element of fire is quite put out,*
> *The Sunne is lost, and th'Earth, and no mans wit*
> *Can well direct him, where to looke for it. . . .*
> *Tis all in peeces, all cohaerence gone.*

Donne's reference to the loss of the medieval cosmology describes well modern fragmentation and cosmological, epistemological, and ontological incoherence. The propositions for alternatives that have continuously been put forward have consistently been marginalized as part of the "transcendental realm of mystic life" or "religion." As Charlene Spretnak (1999) noted, the label of romantic in the "Romantic Movement" is a "pejorative label connoting a sentimental, immature perspective" (131), making it easy to dismiss.

Spretnak (1999) distinguished the resistance movements to modernity. The distinction revolves around whether the movements rejected only some elements of modernism or the core concepts at the root of modernism. For instance, she considered the critique of modernism by Marx, Darwin, Freud, the Frankfurt School, early feminists, and deconstructive postmodernism to still be firmly rooted in the modern worldview and to continue the core discontinuities of modernism—the denial of the body, of nature, of place, and of a spirituality that binds all these relationships. Marx continued an economistic view of society, Darwin a mechanistic view of life, Freud an androcentric view of human psychological needs, and the Frankfurt School and early feminism a rationalist view of social change through changes in power relationships. Deconstructive postmodernism is a disembodied abstractionist/reductionist/anthropocentric view of "reality." Spretnak pointed to movements that have challenged modernism in a more fundamental way—in a way that does not accept the core discontinuities.

The Romantic Movement

> *For a counter-hegemony is not simply opposition, either at the level of cultural intent or social organizational infrastructure. A counter-hegemony means the reorganization of all these elements around the new cultural vision of a genuinely different way of life. (Wexler & Whitson, 1982: 41)*

Opposition to a mechanical cosmology and alienating ontology has bubbled up rhythmically since the Enlightenment. In studying the history of scientific thought, Capra (1992) and Tarnas (1991) traced the dialectical interplay between the Enlightenment and Romanticism as both constituting the modern sensibility, or rather sensibilities (Tarnas, 1991: 377). Spretnak (1999), however, considered the Romantic Movement as an important intellectual heritage with possibilities for moving beyond modernism and its core discontinuities.

The first opposition to the impact of the Enlightenment originated with Rousseau but flowered during the Romantic movement through the literary work of Blake, Wordsworth, and Goethe and the idealism of Hegel and Kant. Most significant, they challenged mechanism through a focus on holism, instrumental reason through a focus on the power of imagination, and scientific abstraction through a focus on connectedness to the dynamic presence of the natural world. Nature, they asserted, was not mechanistically related parts, but rather a sacred whole with an organic fullness of being that is always in the process of unfolding. Goethe believed in "passive attentiveness" to the natural world to hone subtle perceptions as a way to transcend scientific alienation from the natural world aided by aggressive and invasive instruments. He viewed the natural world as "She the Everlasting Oneness in the manyness divined" (Spretnak, 1999: 139).

Hence, the Romantics repositioned their scientific questioning from the reductionist "What is it made of?" to the more holistic "What is its pattern?" reviving an Aristotelian view of the important relationship between substance (matter) and form (pattern). For instance, Goethe revived the sense of a living, spiritual universe by seeing nature as a moving order in which patterns of relationships existed within an organized, harmonious whole. He called this moving order *morphology*, anticipating the systems thinking of today. Herder (1968) would apply this thinking to society as manifesting a *Volkgeist* or unique folk-spirit and to the world as manifesting a *Weltgeist* or world spirit that is continually unfolding.

A second backlash to the mechanism, materialism, and particularly reductionism of microbiology in scientific research was vitalism. Vitalism postulated that there was a nonphysical energy, a vital life force, which is the key to understanding biological life. Recently, Rupert Sheldrake has taken this notion further by suggesting morphogenetic fields that guide biological form. Later, organismic biologists would go beyond the mechanistic metaphors still present in both classical and vitalist biology to postulate that the biological relations within an organism are self-organizing, accounting for the animation of biological form. Immanuel Kant had also seen the limitations of mechanical explanations and considered nature as purposeful and organisms as self-organizing wholes—in which the parts exist *by means of each other* in contrast to mechanisms where the parts exist *for each other* (Capra, 1996: 22). Thus, the Romantics and Idealists were primarily concerned with organic form, a qualitative understanding of patterns, and a teleological, unifying analysis that often evoked a mystical, poetic response.

The Romantic and Idealist movements had two important effects. One was the concentration on emancipatory projects. Drawing from Rousseau, the view that humans are essentially good in their natural state led to emancipatory educational projects to enable the natural power and creativity of children and adults to unfold. Each person was considered to hold unique possibilities which require liberation. The second was the celebration of artistic expressivism over the machine aesthetic pervading modern architecture and art. Eventually, indulgence of individual expression and artistic imagination would take precedence over moral and ethical concerns, leading to the collapse of the Romantic movement. Tarnas (1991) summarized:

> *The underlying powerlessness of the individual in modern life pressed many artists and intellectuals to withdraw from the world, to forsake the public arena. Fewer felt capable of engaging issues beyond those immediately confronting the self and its private struggle for substance, let alone committing to universal moral visions*

> *that no longer appeared tenable; . . . meaning seemed to be no more than an arbitrary construct, truth only a convention, reality undiscoverable. (393)*

Nevertheless, Spretnak (1999) considered the Romantic movement to have initiated the recovery of connection with ecological and spiritual concerns. Most important, the heritage of the Romantic movement is one challenge to the ideologies of denial—denial of the body, of nature, and of place.

Living Systems Theory: The New Science

From within science itself would come the powerful data of a living universe. The dead, clockwork cosmology and natural laws that physics had helped to define crumbled through the "discovery" of quanta and relativity. These new discoveries put the very foundations of physics into doubt and created an existential crisis for various physicists. What Einstein, Heisenberg, Bohr, and Bohm found earlier in the 20th century was uncertainty: that the existentials of form, matter, time, and space were dynamic. These findings challenged the reductionism, objectivity, empiricism, and determinism of the scientific project. In particular they found that

1. atoms were more space than solid matter, and subatomic particles were not things but were interconnections among things so that analyzing an elementary particle was no longer possible as a way to understand the whole;
2. solid material may appear solid, but at the subatomic level it is only in waves of probabilities, and precision in measurement is not fully possible;
3. matter and energy are interchangeable and are seen as either particles or waves depending on the perspective from which they are viewed;
4. space and time are not fixed; rather, space curves and time flows at different rates on a four-dimensional time/space continuum;
5. phenomena take on shape only when observed; therefore the act of observation impacts the object observed limiting objectivity; and
6. there appears to be no causal, deterministic links between certain particles that affect each other synergistically, but these are emergent properties that exist only in the whole.

Heisenberg (as cited in Capra, 1996) stated, "The world thus appears as a complicated tissue of events, in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap or combine and thereby determine the texture of the whole" (30).

What do these arcane findings mean? For many physicists, they led to a spiritual interpretation that there was a deep interconnectedness to the nature of reality that scientific language does not have the capacity to articulate, nor could we ever know all the "facts."

> *Albert Einstein was asked one day by a friend, "Do you believe that absolutely everything can be expressed scientifically?" "Yes, it would be possible," he replied, "but it would make no sense. It would be description without meaning—as if you described a Beethoven symphony as a variation in wave pressure." (Suzuki, 1997: 19)*

Suzuki added that whereas science has difficulty in penetrating life's deepest mystery, music and poetry are more apt expressions, just as Hildegard of Bingen (1163; Fox, 1987), a mystical theologian and scientist, asserted at the last millennial turn.

David Bohm (1980) would develop a new model of reality and a radical theory of wholeness. In the implicate order, any element contains the totality of the universe enfolded within itself. For Bohm, the universe is an undivided wholeness enfolded into an infinite, timeless background source that continually unfolds into visible and temporal material. Conscious thought can grasp the unfolded, but only a consciousness *beyond rational thought* can experience the unfolded. The challenge to us, said Bohm, is to transform ourselves to live in time but also in the timeless, simultaneously.

The parallels to the mystical traditions within most religious and spiritual traditions is clear. As Zen master Dogen (as cited in Kornfield, 1993) said, "To be enlightened is to be intimate with all things" (332), the intimacy of the timeless present. Many scientists have had a profound experience of wonder and awe before the universe, helping them to rediscover their connectedness. As Einstein has said, the view of separation and autonomy is only a delusion.

> *A human being is part of the whole, called by us the universe. A part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures. (Einstein; as cited in Suzuki, 1997: 26)*

Moving toward mystical expression and paradoxical understanding, several research teams have detected evidence of the residual heat or radiation from the "big bang," one team calling it the "handwriting of God" (Ferris, 1993: 10). In fact, everything we are and everything we have touched is considered by these scientists as comprised of atoms once adrift in the stars, all originating from the Big Bang.

As David Suzuki (1997) poetically wrote, with every breathe we take, we breathe the same air with its trillions of molecules as did Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammed, air which has cycled through the universe, through volcanoes. Air is the creative force, the spirit or breath that animates us and holds our life. Yet, we are more than just air breathers; we are creatures made for and by this substance. We need air, but living beings create and sustain the air. From our very first cry to our last sigh at death, our need for air is absolute, and therefore each breath is a sacrament, an essential ritual, said Suzuki.

Air is but one element. The water that flows through our veins is of the ocean and is borne through our blood, sweat, and tears, explaining the many age-old water rituals of transformation, purification, and sharing. Earth also is our substance, for as Suzuki (1997) stated, we are Earthenware. All our nourishment comes from the soils, again explaining the many agricultural rites performed to bring blessing on the fecundity of the soil. It also embraces our sense of belonging, that we are made from a particular Earth locale. Similarly, the sun or divine fire is the energy that flows through all life forms on Earth and gives the capacity to do work. Only the sun can continuously supply new energy, explaining also the reverence for the sun held by many neolithic cultures.

Here we witness the flowing from scientific description into a spiritual sensibility, a reenchantment of the universe. These insights are the makings of a new cosmology that moves beyond the reductionist, mechanistic, objectivist, clockwork cosmology. Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry (1992), a theologian/scientist team, together have attempted to shift from the Newtonian cosmology by compiling an evocative universe story that traces the unfolding of the cosmos from the primordial flaring forth (big bang) to what they call the coming ecozoic era.

> *Tell me the story of the river and the valley and the streams and woodlands and wetlands, of shellfish and finfish. A story of where we are and how we got here and the characters and roles that we play. Tell me a story, a story that will be my story as well as the story of everyone and everything about me, the story that brings us*

> *together in a valley community, a story that brings the human community with every living being in the valley, a story that brings us together under the arc of the great blue sky in the day and the starry heavens at night. (Berry, 1988: 123).*

Many of the aspects included in their universe narrative are still subject to intense debate. Nevertheless, this story is gaining currency and has been used by David Suzuki, Fritjof Capra, Al Gore, Matthew Fox, David Brower, and many others attempting to popularize this cosmology.

Capra (1996) indicated, as Buddhism teaches, that scientists clinging to outmoded conceptions increase suffering. These outmoded conceptions are many: the universe as a mechanical system, the Earth as inert resource, human and other communities of species in a competitive struggle for survival, society as economic unit, the human body as bio-machine, mind as a vast information processor, unlimited material progress through economic and technological growth, and women and minority cultures as "lesser Other." He proposed that once the transitory and fluid nature of all things is accepted, the frustrated grasping can end and the fragmenting illusion of a separate, independent self and a world "out there" can be transcended.

It is these modernist abstractions that have deeply alienated society, creating what Francisco Varela (1991) called our *Cartesian anxiety*. Varela concluded that we need to let go of the desire for a ground, for an absolute foundation for knowledge, and choose a middle way between absolutism (the project of foundationalism) and nihilism (the collapse of theism):

> *Our grasping after an inner ground is the essence of ego-self and is the source of continuous frustration, . . . includes our clinging to an outer ground in the form of the idea of a pregiven and independent world. In other words, our grasping after a ground, whether inner or outer, is the deep source of frustration and anxiety. . . Within the tradition of mindfulness/awareness meditation, the motivation has been to develop a direct and stable insight into absolutism and nihilism as forms of grasping that result from the attempt to find a stable ego-self and so limit our lived world to the experience of suffering and frustration. By progressively learning to let go of these tendencies to grasp, one can begin to appreciate that all phenomena are free of any absolute ground and that such "groundlessness" (sunyata) is the very fabric of coorigination. (143-144)*

What Maturana & Varela (1980) suggested through their research into mind, cognition, and consciousness is that our world is continuously shaped by our actions as well as by all the natural processes around us. In other words, mind and world arise together. There is still a real material world, but it does not take shape independent of cognition. Cognition is not a representation of an independently existing world, but a "continual bringing forth of *a* world through the process of living" (Capra, 1997: 267). This "enables us to negotiate a middle path between the Scylla of cognition as the recovery of a pregiven outer world (realism) and the Charybdis of cognition as the projection of a pregiven inner world (idealism)" (Varela, 1991: 172) through the notion of embodied action.

Archetypal Postmodernism

Richard Tarnas (1991) came to a different conclusion about reality and knowledge in his broad historical study of ideas. It appears that "virtually every important element of the Western intellectual past is now present and active in one form or another" (402). Alongside all facets of modern thinking described above are the recovery of neolithic traditions, including Celtic, pagan, and goddess rituals; native and indigenous spiritualities; Greco-Roman mythology; the mystical traditions of all major religions; feminine archetypes and the sacred feminine; and Medieval values and beliefs, such as angels. This led Tarnas to suggest that they are all gathering on the intellectual stage for a climactic synthesis. In dialectical fashion, he considered there to be two antithetical impulses present in intellectual circles—one pressing for a radical deconstruction and the other for a radical integration and reconciliation. He saw these as polarized but complementary in moving towards a primary synthesis which will address the epochal crisis of modernism.

The crisis is, in Tarnas' (1991) estimation, "an essentially masculine crisis" (441) explaining the tremendous surge in the feminine and in unitary consciousness that was repressed during the Modern Age. He saw this moment as a *kairos* moment for the synthesis or union of opposites: the yin (feminine) and the yang (masculine). It is the recovery of the participation mystique with nature, of mystery and ambiguity, of imagination, emotion, instinct, body, and woman—all that has been "Other." Until now, the evolution of the Western mind has been driven by the heroic impulse to separate from the primordial unity with nature and forge an autonomous rational human self. Now, he said:

> *The deepest passion of the Western mind has been to reunite with the ground of its own being, . . . the great feminine principle in life, and thus to recover its connection with the whole . . . on a new and profoundly different level from that of the primordial unconscious unity. (443)*

Drawing from Jungian psychology, Tarnas summarized this historical change as archetypal change:

> *The answer I am suggesting here is that a paradigm emerges in the history of science, it is recognized as superior, as true and valid, precisely when that paradigm resonates with the current archetypal state of the evolving collective psyche. . . . And here we can see why the same paradigm, such as the Aristotelian or the Newtonian, is perceived as a liberation at one time and then a constriction, a prison, at another. For the birth of every new paradigm is also a conception in an new conceptual matrix. . . . And because the evolution of paradigm shifts is an archetypal process, rather than merely either a rational-empirical or a sociological one, this evolution takes place historically both from within and without, both "subjectively" and "objectively," . . . for the very possibility of a new world view's appearance rests on the underlying archetypal dynamic of the larger culture; . . . the collective psyche seems to be in the grip of a powerful archetypal dynamic in which the long-alienated modern mind is breaking through. (438-440)*

Fritjof Capra (1996), in his study of the New Science (especially the most recent discoveries and scientific practices that have yet to become part of the popular consciousness), echoed this conclusion that the paradigm of a reductionist, objectivist science is competing with the new wholistic, systems science, leading to a cultural synthesis of the yin (feminine) and the yang (masculine).

Ecological Postmodernism

The universe is made of stories, not of atoms. (Muriel Rukeyse as cited in Hampson & Whalen, 1991).

Charlene Spretnak (1999) offered a kindred but embodied and embedded conclusion. With the two polarized postmodern streams toward hypermodernism and deconstructionism, she, together with David Ray Griffen, Charles Jencks, and Richard Falk, proposed that a truly postmodern alternative is an ecological postmodernism that is "restructive." Going beyond the narrow confines of environmentalism and beyond the groundlessness of modern postmodernism they reconstruct a grounded, deeply ecological, and spiritual postmodernism. She advocated the return to myth, myth that evokes the "true sense of communion with the deepest truths of existence" (182). Story is the most powerful way of communicating, she claimed, and thus she affirmed the cosmologic storytelling of "geologian" Thomas Berry and physicist Brian Swimme. She agreed that all human knowledge is situated in particular social constructions, but went further to say that all human endeavours are also situated in "ecosocial, or cosmic-social, construction: the dynamic processes of the larger reality without which there would be no body, nature, or place, let alone 'social construction'" (184). She considered the ecofeminist tradition as the recovery of connectedness to the body; the romantic, indigenous, and ecology movements as the recovery of connectedness to the natural world; and ecosystems science as the recovery of our place in the cosmological, and therefore spiritual, place.

Transformative theorist, Edmund O'Sullivan (1999), has blended archetypal and ecological postmodernism into an educational agenda. He sees the task of educators to choose between a sustainable planetary habitat or the global competitive marketplace. He advocates an ecozoic vision for education, containing the new cosmological story of Swimme and Berry, that would generate sustainability as the new ground of moral purpose. In considering industrial civilization to be a cultural pathology, he suggests that deep cultural therapy is necessary to augment this historically transformative moment. In this way, he blends Jungian analysis, critical theory, and ecological postmodernism into transformative learning that reaches the deeper levels of consciousness – the dream structures of individuals and the culture.

SUMMARY: CONSIDERING WHOLENESS

> *Wholeness . . . is not achieved by cutting off a portion of one's being, but by integration of the contraries. (Jung, 1993: 467)*

> *We may be seeing the beginning of the reintegration of our culture, a new possibility of the unity of consciousness. If so, it will not be on the basis of any new orthodoxy, either religious or scientific. Such a new integration will be based on the rejection of all univocal understandings of reality, of all identifications of one conception of reality with reality itself. It will recognize the multiplicity of the human spirit, and the necessity to translate constantly between different scientific and imaginative vocabularies. It will recognize the human proclivity to fall comfortably into some single literal interpretation of the world and therefore the necessity to be continuously open to rebirth in a new heaven and a new Earth. It will recognize that in both scientific and religious culture all we have finally are symbols, but that there is an enormous difference between the dead letter and the living word. (Bellah, 1970: x)*

Western societies are listing, rudderless and paralyzed under the loss of invigorating myths and the larger moral and ethical horizons embedded in these myths. As Taylor (1991) observed:

> *The worry has been repeatedly expressed that the individual lost something important along with the larger social and cosmic horizons of action. Some have written of this as the loss of a heroic dimension to life. People no longer have a sense of a higher purpose, of something worth dying for. . . . In another articulation, we suffer from a lack of passion; . . . [we] have no aspiration left in life but to a "pitiable comfort." (1991: 4)*

This literature review suggests that our societies reflect a cosmological disenchantment, ontological alienation, and epistemological relativism. The essence of the ideals that animated the modern revolutions and created the public square was the desire to rise above mythological belief to find certain truth. This certainty has generated a managed society, social conformity, rational-bureaucratic workplaces, the tyranny of technology, commodified and utilitarian relationships, identities defined by consumption, and ecological alienation. It is now also reflected in the revival of fundamentalism and global corporatism, or what Barber (1992) termed *the centripedal forces of Jihad and the centrifugal forces of McWorld*.

What is being discovered, as Horkheimer and Adorno ([1944] 1977) concluded, is not that we have brought an end to myths, but that new myths have replaced the old. The myths of unfettered fulfillment, an emancipated society, mathematical comprehension of reality, mastery of nature, and enlightened humanity have proved to be siren songs that have cast society upon the rocks of domination, impotence, and conformity. Most of all, these myths have atrophied the imagination. Yet, it is clear that there is a great synchronicity among the new myths being told and the new symbols and archetypes being revived and communicated in language, art, and music. Together they are dissolving dualism, breaking down mechanism, overcoming the suppression of the female principle, and embracing the natural world. How can the symbols, stories, and archetypes that are emerging give insight into what is required of educators? How do we understand transformation in the midst of these analyses and contentions? What symbols and rituals are meaningful and connective? What overcomes doubt and skepticism to unleash creativity and imagination while mimicking the dynamic balance of the natural world? What enables us to face our grasping and broaden our sense of self? To address some of these new questions first requires an analysis of enlightenment assumptions within transformative learning theories.

ENLIGHTENMENT ASSUMPTIONS IN TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORIES

Conceptualizing Transformation

Transformation generally can be understood as a profound or deep-level change in a person's fundamental approach to life as well as in society's structures, systems, and processes. Rooted in the modern ideals of liberty, equality, justice, and democracy is the premise of the reconstructibility of society and individuals through transformative change. The thread that ties modern thought from the Enlightenment *philosophes* (e.g., Rousseau and Locke) to more contemporary educators (e.g., Dewey and Freire) is the humanist belief in the intrinsic goodness of humanity that has been misshapen by oppressive social forces or exploitative economic forces. The calls for transformation, liberation, freedom, and emancipation are all verbs—referring to a process of transforming individuals and society that enables the full realization of human goodness—as well as nouns—referring to the end point of an ideal society and human.

For instance, Plato's *Republic*, Rousseau's *Emile*, and Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* all posit normative criteria of an ideal society, a specific conception of humanity, and an educational process for creating such a society. Generally it is the discrepancy between the ideal and the actual that gives rise to notions of what requires changing and who the agents and mechanisms of change ought to be. Whether the creation of an ideal society is considered to require reform or revolutionary change of existing systems and structures, it is still a modern liberal belief that we have the power and responsibility to work towards a more progressive society, however defined. In this modern liberal view, it is the structure of society that provides the conditions for freedom and justice. If it does not, then it is incumbent upon individuals to join their energies together to create these conditions.

There are three predominant views of transformation in adult transformative learning theory. The first is the view of personal transformation for an autonomous individual, the second is organizational transformation for instrumental effectiveness, and the third is social empowerment for societal transformation.

Personal Transformation for the Autonomous Individual

The foremost theorist of personal transformation for an autonomous individual is Jack Mezirow (1991, 1997). Consonant with the precepts of modernism, he acknowledged that the task of individuals is to determine their own meanings in relation to the world around them. For this reason, Mezirow suggested that the purpose of transformative learning is to develop autonomous, socially responsible thinking. More specifically, the purpose of transformative learning is to effect a change in the personal frame of reference towards a more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative frame.

The formative learning of childhood provides approved ways of seeing and understanding through the socialization by parents, friends, and mentors; and through schooling. Although important for children, these rules for interpretation limit adult learning by restricting thinking and acting to externally determined horizons, often viewed as the "natural even inevitable order of reality" (Mezirow, 1991: 2). Given the rapid social change in our modern society, Mezirow indicated that many contradictions arise when traditional authority structures break down and where diverse beliefs and practices surround individuals (Mezirow, 1994: 222). This phenomenon requires adults to acquire new perspectives to understand the increasing diversity and to exert control over their lives. Although some people more vigorously attempt to apply their old ways of knowing that result in rigid and highly defended thought patterns (Mezirow, 1991: 156), alternatively, adults can embark on a process of transformative learning.

Mezirow (1991) described transformative learning as "the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand and feel about our world" (167). For Mezirow, adult frames of reference comprise meaning schemes and meaning perspectives. *Meaning perspectives* are the habits of mind or unarticulated systems that determine expectations, such as personal paradigms or worldviews. *Meaning schemes* are points of view within a given paradigm, such as the knowledge, beliefs, values, and feelings. Whereas it is easier for people to engage in technical or practical learning, transformative learning is examining the very premises of one's thought and confronting contradictions that do not fit into their existing worldview.

For Mezirow (1991), there are three forms of reflection, only one of which is transformative given its focus on assumptions. Instrumental or technical reflection on *content* is usually task-oriented problem solving. Practical reflection on *process* is trying to comprehend meanings, either theoretical meaning or the meaning behind how others view the world. Critical reflection on *premises* is trying to understand how one came to understand the world. This reflection on premises usually results in transforming meaning perspectives. Mezirow claimed that adult education, then, should aim to facilitate critical premise reflection, as transforming meaning perspectives ought to be the central process for adult development (155).

Through the two conditions of critical reflection and rational discourse, Mezirow (1991) contended that individuals can begin to interpret their experiences differently to develop new meaning structures. Rather than passively accepting the definitions of others, they move into autonomy by no longer relying on authority, tradition, or assimilated frames of reference. Although critical reflection does not necessarily lead to transformative learning, it is a critical component of transformative learning. Critical discourse with others enables individuals to explore their own assumptions and the assumptions of others, and to be challenged. Self-reflection can lead to transformative change, but critical discourse in a learning community has a greater likelihood of facilitating transformative learning. Mezirow contended that this kind of autonomous and responsible thinking is vital for democratic citizenship and moral decision making.

There are many variables in a learning situation that determine how a learner creates meaning: their paradigm, the mix of language skills between the adult and educator, the desire to learn, relevance of the learning, self-image, gender, race, class, previous life experiences, sense of efficacy in the educational environment, and other circumstances. These factors illustrate the complexity of any learning situation and the potential for infinitely diverse interpretations that learners can give to the same educational experience. Therefore, trying to "manufacture" transformative experiences predicated on the expectation that a group of people will interpret and find meaning in a similar way is based on a popular, beguiling assumption that "managing change" is possible or even desirable. Therefore, although transformative learning cannot be planned, a space for critical discourse can establish the conditions for transformative learning.

Transformative learning is not a stage or phase theory, but several theorists have identified a common movement through a transformative learning experience. By combining the common threads in a number of theories, including the three learning postures of Phil Mullins (1988), the 10 phases determined by Jack Mezirow (1991), and the three phases proposed by Jane Taylor (1989), the following phases can be considered part of perspective transformation.

Precritical Phase

The first phase in perspective transformation is a precritical phase in which learners have internalized the dominant views and social goals of a society, and they sense that the present rules for seeing are necessary to their *equilibrium* and the stability of society. These learners work from an intensely singular personal perspective, and other perspectives are considered interesting, perhaps exotic, but incorrect. Through a *disorienting dilemma* or trigger event (personal upheavals such as illness or divorce, an eye-opening book, experiencing a different culture, or the accumulation of contradictory views around them), an individual begins to examine what he/she thought were settled issues and his/her own thinking and beliefs (Mezirow, 1991; Mullins, 1988; Taylor, 1989). This challenge to an established perspective can be very painful as it questions deeply held values and, consequently, the very sense of self (Mezirow, 1991).

Critical Phase

Whereas some people may stall the struggle to understand or retreat back into old patterns of thinking, others will surge forward and explore alternative perspectives and engage in a critical assessment of personal and societal assumptions. A process of *scanning* occurs in which they survey various worldviews and look for others who offer alternative perspectives that can explain their dilemma and offer a new unifying principle (Loder, 1981). They become more discriminating by sifting through many of the values, beliefs, and knowledge that comprise their worldview; hence, their old framework begins to *break down*. They begin to compare the words and actions of persons, organizations, and institutions according to a newly developing framework of worldviews. Through questioning, they develop a critical understanding of how their relationships and culture have shaped their beliefs. As they move through this phase, the critical thinking process imparts a sense of *autonomy* and personal competence as they separate themselves from social expectations. They also become more inclusive as they begin to accept other perspectives as equally valid and eventually move toward seeing other perspectives as contextually bound.

Commitment Phase

Mezirow (1991) emphasized that it takes emotional strength and an act of will to propel one forward, because new critical insights can create immobilization. After the uncertainty of scanning, they begin sorting what assumptions, knowledge, values, and beliefs to keep and what to shed. These decisions are made based on many factors, such as how the perspective can contribute to their growth, how much stability can be maintained as they change, and what the practical value is to their life. The role of *imagination* here is important as the person projects him/herself into new roles, relationships, and actions that constitute a new perspective or worldview (Loder, 1981; Mezirow, 1991). They try out the perspective on those around them; in other words, the validation of others plays a significant role at this phase. The individual may make a *commitment* to a new perspective that is usually not consciously planned but is a dramatic "leap of faith" toward shifting their vision of reality (Taylor, 1989). The learners *plan* to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for implementing their plans that will help them make this new perspective a part of their lives. In this phase, there is often a feeling of rebirth that generates the energy to persist and the strength to be public about their beliefs.

Integration Phase

In this phase, individuals gradually gain confidence and competence with their new perspective, which gives them a new equilibrium. They do not need to look for new authorities for their direction but seek this from within. They continually reconfirm their commitment as they move toward *integrating* the perspective coherently into all aspects of their lives. They often go back to address their emotional and spiritual dimensions within the context of this new perspective.

> *Having become practiced at emptying themselves of preconceived notions and prejudices and able to perceive the invisible underlying fabric that connects everything, they do not think in terms of factions or blocs or even national boundaries; they* know *this to be one world. (Peck, 1987: 193)*

Thus, their new perspective remains permeable and *open* to other considerations, and this creates a foundation for life-long adult development. The new worldview significantly changes their sense of personal identity; they move toward *accepting* uncertainty, ambiguity, mystery, and complexity and are aware of the connectedness between their personal lives and society.

Critique of Personal Transformation for the Autonomous Individual

Mezirow's theory of transformative learning is founded on many modernist assumptions. First, Mezirow subscribed to a view of transformation as a rational, analytical, and cognitive process as he utilizes a Habermasian understanding of the rationality of reasoned discussion and ideal learning conditions. Yet, Mezirow departed in significant ways from critical theory, prompting Collard and Law (1989) to charge that he avoided critique of sociocultural contexts and ignored social action as a necessary aspect of emancipatory change. Although Mezirow said that transformative learning is inherently social and action oriented, he was defining communicative action as "the social" and critical reflection as "action." He stopped short of transformative learning as action to equalize the power relations in society (Cunningham, 1992). Mark Tennant (1993, 1994) asserted that Mezirow psychologizes social problems and therefore enables a person to adjust to an inherently unjust and alienating society without identifying the social origins of their psychological premises or the limits to autonomous action. Clark and Wilson (1991) considered that Mezirow's reach for universal principles of adult development and education renders his theory insensitive to the social context in which personal transformation takes place.

In contrast, Sue Scott (1997) proposed that the goal of transformative learning is an expansion of consciousness or personality change through individuation. Her research indicates that transformative learning is also extrarational, intuitive, creative, and often a profound emotional experience. For this reason, she determined that transformative learning is a "holistic experience difficult to explain" (Grabove, 1997: 91). Scott (1992) claimed that analytical-depth psychology has the power to liberate knowing from scientific definition and normalization. "Transformation is not a rational process, although it includes rational abilities, and cannot be pushed or planned for as in a goal-oriented, technical, rational process" (Scott, 1997: 44). It is providing the space for images and fantasies to erupt into consciousness by stilling the ego and body. In her analysis of social activists in the Lincoln Alliance, she observed that they experienced transpersonal change—change that went beyond the self to identification with the global and the spiritual. By tapping both the collective and personal unconscious, transformation can enable the transcendence of the individual ego that is subject to delusion. In sum, she viewed transformation as soul work through the reintegration of body and mind.

Organizational Transformation for Instrumental Effectiveness

Organizational transformation theory is significant for its alignment with human resource development (HRD) initiatives. HRD is a corporate-sponsored model of workplace education that integrates more humanistic goals into training. The specific purpose of HRD is to provide a comprehensive, continuous program for staff training and development (Srivinas, 1984). It directs employee learning toward becoming more productive and "empowered." By adding "value" to human performance in this way, organizations can position themselves for ongoing marketplace changes.

This purpose flows out of the premises of human capital theory, in which strategic investment and development are believed necessary for converting latent human talent into productive skills (Marchak, 1991; Todaro, 1985). It also builds on Mayo's (1933) findings that people's productivity increases when they are happy and their social needs are met at work. Theory Y, then, utilizes behavioral psychology to arrange organizational conditions and relationships to help people feel respected, useful, important, and connected (McGregor, 1967). This investment into humans as capital and "soft" human relations management underwrites all of the new HRD programs, such as Total Quality Management, Learning Organizations (Senge, 1990a, 1990b; Watkins & Marsick, 1993), Double Loop Organizational Learning (Argyris, 1977), Transformative Professional

Development (Cranton, 1996), Action Reflection Learning ™ (O'Neil & Marsick, 1995), and Continuous Learning in the Workplace (Marsick & Watkins, 1992).

Particularly as work organizations were euphemistically being "reengineered" and "restructured" in the 1980s and 1990s to meet the demands of an increasingly globalized market, learning programs were needed that would break down old habits of mind and practice to keep organizations abreast of changes and stay financially profitable. There was a focus on "win-win" solutions for employees and employers in which both could be empowered through learning. Adult educators were in demand for assisting organizations in transformative learning to deal with exploding information, accelerated competition, and the technological imperative. Through transformative learning, it was expected that individual employees could become more flexible, quick-learning, and innovative.

More recently, this has expanded onto spiritual ground by introducing spirituality-based worker development programs (Fenwick & Lange, 1998). Leigh (1997) cited many U.S. programs with mandates of "fostering social and spiritual transformation in the workplace" and "dedicated to the further development of human consciousness through spiritual understanding" (33). Leigh went on to suggest that this latest interest responds to

a. despirited workers, reeling from increased demands, needing more purpose and meaning in their work;
b. trainers who believe that the workplace is a key source of connection and contribution for many people; and
c. workers' desire to be of service to the community.

The process of transformative learning in organizations is similar across the above programs. In particular, a learning organization is defined as "one that learns continuously and transforms itself. . . . Learning is a continuous, strategically used process—integrated and running parallel to work" (Watkins & Marsick, 1996: 4; as cited in Ellinger et al., 2000: 107). Senge (1990a) elaborated that learning may be the only sustainable source of competitive advantage. Therefore, leaving the "learning" to the top echelons in an organization is to miss opportunities for growth. The task is to integrate thinking and acting at all levels of the organization, said Senge. To do this, several common processes appear in the literature: inquiry (to derive insightful analysis of current reality), shared visioning (determining together where the organization wants to be), surfacing mental models/critical reflection/paradigm shifts (revealing assumptions that have created existing structures and behaviour patterns), systems thinking (seeing interrelationships and the big picture), empowerment (to move toward the vision), and generative learning (learning to create new structures and processes). These new processes are facilitated through dialogue, collaboration, and teamwork. The success of these processes is measured by an improvement in the organization's performance and ultimately in its assets, financial and intellectual capital (Marsick & Watkins, 1999; as cited in Ellinger, et al., 2000: 107).

Critique of Organizational Transformation for Instrumental Effectiveness

Although there have been wide-ranging critiques of organizational transformative learning, the following two critiques encompass many others. First, critical reflection outside of the parameters set by the organization, and its immediate goals of competitive advantage and profitability, direct and ultimately limit empowerment and critical thinking. Transformative learning linked to problem solving is instrumental in nature and never attends to the question of why and what, or particularly to the possibility of organizational demise (Fenwick, 1998). Fenwick went on to suggest that knowledges which do not fit into the organization's framework of relevance alienate workers from their own meanings. Transformative learning in learning organizations also constitutes learners as perpetually in deficit needing to "keep up" with change in an atmosphere of hyperactive productivity. Finally, it marginalizes any consideration of the dynamics of gender, race, and class on the learning process and positionality in the workplace.

Second, organizational transformative learning helps managers retain control under much different marketplace conditions (Coopey; as cited in Ellinger et al., 2000), rendering it a fundamentally conservative process that distorts the intent of transformative learning. The instrumental nature of this form of transformative learning results in manipulative processes that set specific behavioural goals toward which employees are to transform. Most frightening is the confessional nature of critical reflection that appropriates individual reflection and meaning (Fenwick, 1998). Through transformational learning, these meanings are subject to scrutiny, thereby enhancing organizational power over employees and leaving the power structure unreflected upon.

In sum, Cunningham (1992) argued that HRD has simply appropriated the language and concepts of transformative learning as a "progressive" way to *reproduce* human capital.

Critical Education For Societal Transformation

Paulo Freire (1970, 1985), undoubtedly the most significant contributor to a theory of radical nonformal adult education (Brady, 1994; Giroux, 1985; Weiler, 1994), proposed that the task of humanization or "cultural action for freedom" is the fundamental purpose for transformative education. Critical education attempts to foster an individual's understanding of him/herself within the larger political and economic forces in which he/she exists. The intent is not personal transformation, although that will happen; it is societal transformation. Humanization of individuals and their societies is only possible through a process of liberation—in which the mind, body, and spirit colonized by the existent economic and political system are set free—so that individuals can be critical and creative producers of self and society (Allman & Wallis, 1990).

Societal transformation theories are rooted in radical or critical theory[19] incorporating a conflict theory of social change. Conflict theory suggests that social change results from the struggles for power between dominant and marginalized groups. Critical theory holds a negative concept of ideology (Allman, 1999) in which ruling groups generate a specific way of viewing the world—specific customs, rituals, beliefs, and values—that become accepted as natural and common sense. These views of reality are distorted, however, in not revealing the true nature of social relations that benefit ruling groups. In promoting their power as legitimate and the status quo as necessary and inevitable, ruling groups create ideological hegemony.[20] Individuals belonging to powerless groups are thereby prevented from fulfilling their aspirations, or even having aspirations beyond their classed, raced, or gendered position. In this way, ideology structures the unconscious of citizens and disguises the inequitable relations of power and privilege (Giroux, 1983: 81; McLaren, 1989: 176).

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[19] Radical and critical shall be used interchangeably: the use of critical echoes the Frankfurt School in developing a critical perspective through a process of critique getting at the underlying reality of all social practices (Held, 1980), and the use of radical to mean "getting to the root of" the structures of domination in order to propose fundamental changes.

[20] Hegemony, as defined by Gramsci particularly, is the outcome of ruling groups dominating the larger societal perceptions and the structures of social reality. They exercise hegemony through the various ways of exerting their influence, winning consent, and the diffusion of a world view through various functionaries. They can also achieve hegemony through coercion (Mayo, 1999; Weiler, 1988).

The role of transformative education, therefore, is to break through the ideology created by the ruling group and to challenge the inequalities and injustices that arise from poverty, racism, patriarchy, neocolonialism, and other oppressive social relations. Education can contribute to transforming social structures by enabling subordinate groups to understand their historical conditions, become conscious of group interests, and organize to advance their interests, thereby creating a just society. The radicalness of radical education, then, is that education is never neutral, but always political, in that it concerns the structures that constitute power. Freire was clear, however, that adult education cannot "transform society by itself"—by intellectual reflection unrelated to significant movements in which social action concretely occurs (Shor & Freire, 1987: 37). "Precisely because education is not the lever for the transformation of society, we are in danger of despair and of cynicism if we limit our struggle to the classroom; . . . nevertheless transformation is an educational event" (129).

Learning, said Paulo Freire (1985), can either be domesticating or liberating. For this reason, the *raison d'etre* of social transformation is understood as "moving beyond the existing form" through change at the *radix* or root of systems, not getting sidetracked on the symptoms of structural oppression (Mayo, 1999). Transformative learning is a response *against* repression, poverty, oppression, and injustice as much as it is a struggle *for* justice and equality (LaBelle, 1986; Vio Grossi, 1981). For this reason, it is explicitly associated with the historical struggles of the poor and exploited (Arnove & Dewee, 1991; Mayo, 1999; Rastegar as cited in LaBelle, 1986).

Therefore, the earliest roots of social transformative learning were in social movements. In Southern nations, popular education successfully mobilized movements for revolutionary change, particularly in Cuba, Tanzania, and Central America (LaBelle, 1986; Lange Christensen, 1988; Vilas, 1986). In North America, radical educators such as Myles Horton[21] (as cited in Horton & Freire, 1990) deliberately chose to work outside of the system when he

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[21] Horton initiated the Highlander Centre in the Appalachian mountains in Tennessee.

> *concluded that reform within the system reinforced the system, or was co-opted by the system. Reformers didn't change the system, they made it more palatable and justified it, made it more humane, more intelligent. We didn't want to make that contribution to the schooling system. (200)*

Welton (1987) and Lovett (1980) affirmed that in connection with social movements, adult education retains some radical nature.

Today, in the Northern context, many agree that the original emancipatory purpose of adult education has been domesticated to concerns of competency and behavioural development, motivational strategies, professionalization, institutionalization, and organizational change (Collins, 1991; Cunningham, 1992; Hart, 1990).[22] Some would say that Freire's learning theory for social transformation is irrelevant given the context of modernity. Phyllis Cunningham (1992) disagreed and drew a distinction between the naked power wielded in Southern contexts and how power is masked in Northern contexts through symbolic violence, technicism, and the colonization of life spaces. Northern populations largely lack critical consciousness, are comprised of many marginalized sectors, and are limited in avenues for meaningful political participation, making critical transformative learning very relevant.

Cunningham (1992) went on to critique the psychologizing of transformation learning theory and carefully described the social dimension of transformation learning, which is often misunderstood. The first aspect hinges on the nature of critique. Although it is important to understand one's personal biography and to transform one's distorted assumptions, these understandings must be situated historically and structurally. Many of our beliefs and behaviours are alienating because they were shaped by the social structures around us. Similarly, in formal education, the knowledge, the knowing process, the language, and the educational institution all have a power structure implicit in them. Often, this critical reading of "the word" and "the world," as Freire (Shor & Freire, 1997) called it, can lead to despair and fatalism rather than empowerment. For this reason, a language of critique must also be accompanied by a language of possibility and hope

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[22] One of the first theorists of adult education in North Amercian, Malcolm Knowles (1978), postulated that the primary distinguishing feature of adult education is its andragogical rather than pedagogical process. The distinction of andragogy as a model for the art and science of helping adults has been hotly debated with most of the defining characteristics being refuted, except affirming that adults bring more experience to the learning situation (Pratt, 1993; Welton, 1987).

(Freire, 1997b; Mayo, 1999). Hope, said Freire, is an ontological need, not naivete, and must be the anchor for the struggle to bring justice and equality to our social life together.

Possibility is also revealed when learners experience "radical democracy" in a learning situation founded on dialogue. Such dialogue problematizes our "taken-for-granted" realities to identify the workings of colonization and alienation as well as the spaces for freedom. Freire acknowledged that there is a tension between the educator as authoritarian and an authority, and thus he reconceptualized teachers and learners as teacher-learners and learner-teachers, where teachers learn and transform alongside the learners (Shor & Freire, 1987). Feminist poststructuralists have criticized that such dialogue can also have oppressive dynamics and be just as manipulative as other educational programs, particularly when educators deliberately set out to "empower" someone else; namely, their students (Cunningham, 1992; Ellsworth, 1992; Gore, 1992). Often, critical pedagogy assumes that power can be given over to students as property. It also assumes that the critical discourse itself is empowering because it opposes dominant thinking. They charge that critical pedagogy ignores the unequal power relations that exist in the classroom and does not respect the multiplicity of social positions that individual learners bring to the learning experience. Ellsworth suggested that the development of affinity groups or coalitions within a learning group can affirm the differences within a class, provide the experience of naming oppression within the group, and facilitate social action within the group and institution.

This leads to another important aspect of the social dimension of transformative learning, praxis, or the relationship between thinking and action. Paula Allman (1999) chastised the simplistic use of the notion of praxis and clearly linked it to Marxian dialectics. Without understanding dialectics, praxis cannot be well understood, and this leads to mechanical debates on whether thinking comes first and then action, whether individual change precedes social change, and whether critical reflection is action. Allman said that these debates have been shaped by "liberal bourgeois" notions of the individual and of epistemology.

Dialectical thinking is relational thinking in which two opposing or contradictory social positions are fundamentally related and cannot exist without each other. For instance, the positions of oppressed and oppressor are dialectically linked, for one cannot exist without its counterpart. This is what is meant by the "unity of opposites" (Allman, 1999: 64). The important part is not to reify these "categories" into "things," but rather to see their inherent connectedness that keeps this social relation operating. Allman, drawing on Sayer's (1983; as cited in Allman, 1999) interpretation of Marx, considered these positions as internally related, not as discrete entities that interconnect. Therefore, it is the relation between oppressor and oppressed that is of concern and needs to change, not the people per se, although that will occur. This is what is meant by *social* transformative change in that the concrete relation between people changes not just their understanding of the relation.

Using this notion of dialectics, praxis is an internal relation that is an inseparable unity of active existence with thought (Allman, 1999: 40). In this sense, praxis is the not the mechanical application of theory to practice, but the ontological relation of "being" and "knowing." What this means is that our daily movements are informed and shaped by the ideas and concepts that are part of our social world. Transformation, particularly as Freire (1985) regarded it, is simultaneously experiencing new relations as well as new thinking about those relations. Social transformation has not occurred if it is not manifested in action, or rather in changed relations. It is important to note that at this point many experience a "fear of freedom" and can retrench back into the old relation or switch positions (the oppressed become the oppressors).

The limited notion of individual in our current society is one that sees the only important attribute as the human choice or will. Human freedom, then, is only about being exercise one's choice, notably in the marketplace. Ironically, in a liberal state, individuals "divest their political power and activity, their choices, their decisions and the execution of political activities, in other people" (Allman, 1999: 41). This is one aspect of alienation in which individuals are not active in the "politics" of daily activity, in which the natural relation between daily activity and politics has been artificially separated in liberal ideology. This, then, affirms the importance of the relationship between transformative learning and participatory action research, in which politics, social critique, knowledge creation, and social action are intimately linked.

The last aspect of social transformative learning to be explicated here is the fundamentally normative basis upon which it rests. Critical transformative learning emphasizes developing ethical judgments, not only developing intellectual growth, technical skills, scientific knowledge, or instrumental rationality (LaBelle, 1986; Toh & Floresca-Cawagas, 1990). Morrow (1993) indicated that any theory committed to social change is guided by normative orientations that posit an ideal society and ideal human and that the discrepancy between the ideal and the actual gives rise to notions of what requires changing and identifies the agents and mechanism of change. This normative orientation of radical education has provided the bridge between education, ethics, and theology and has warranted the categorization of many radical educators as utopian socialist or anarchist[23] (Freire, 1985; Morrow & Torres, 1995).

Conclusions on Transformation Learning Theory

The purpose of this lengthy chapter has been to enact critical transformative discourse by analyzing the ideas and structures that have shaped these variants of transformation theory. Although this study draws primarily from critical social transformation theory, it acknowledges that each of the three transformative learning theories have implicit enlightenment assumptions that are problematic. First, there is an assumption of the reconstructibility of individuals, organizations, and society that undergirds these theories. This assumption implies a mechanistic cosmos that bears no relation to human life and the agency to transform, but is still within the "ideologies of denial" that deny "the knowing body, the creative cosmos, and the complex sense of place" (Spretnak, 1999: 14). Second, they are predicated on a scientific epistemology that seeks transformation through the active engagement of reason and marginalizes other forms of knowledge that cannot be subjected to scientific processes. Third, individuals are considered autonomous and therefore able to transform without accounting for embeddedness in their bodies, their species, the natural world, and the social world. This autonomy is related to the fragmented identities and horizons of meaning in which people find it difficult to form a common purpose among themselves. Except for critical transformation theory, the other two theories do account for the technological control, social conformity, economic hegemony, and instumental/bureaucratic rationalities that shape daily life in North America. The next chapter will summarize the issues within action research theory and then move toward several methodological and theoretical propositions around these issues.

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[23] Anarchist is used here in the sense of working against any organized coercive, exploitative, authoritarian, bureaucratic power in society.

CHAPTER THREE

HOPE AND LIVING PRACTICE:

PROPOSITIONS FOR ACTION RESEARCH AND TRANSFORMATIVE PEDAGOGY

> *True unity in the individual and between [humans] and nature, as well as between [human] and [human], can arise only in a form of action that does not attempt to fragment the whole of reality...fragmentation is in essence a confusion around the question of difference and sameness (or one-ness), but the clear perception of these categories is necessary in every phase of life. To be confused about what is different and what is not, is to be confused about everything. Thus, it is not an accident that our fragmentary form of thought is leading to such a widespread range of crises, social, political, economic, ecological, psychological, etc., in the individual and in society as a whole. Such a mode of thought implies unending development of chaotic and meaningless conflict, in which the energies of all tend to be lost by movements that are antagonistic or else at cross-purposes. (Bohm, 1980:16; emphasis in original)*

SEEING WHOLE AND SEEING PARTIAL: THE PARADOX

The process for this study has been akin to threading the Minoan labyrinth of ancient times, in which I have had the pleasure of walking on the isle of Crete. In the prepatriarchal version of this myth, Ariadne was considered the Great Mother. Her womb was the great labyrinth that humans threaded on their journey through life, death, and rebirth (Monk Kidd, 1996: 109). Ariadne has been revered as the sacred guide who aids people through the dark and difficult passages by providing them with a ball of thread to find their way. The thread symbolizes connectedness to the web of life and the wisdom found in the hidden and unseen. This journey through a womb-like labyrinth with a sacred guide is an ancient archetype for the journey of transformation—the subject of this study.

Labyrinths exist in most religious traditions and have been considered a model of ancient spiritual cosmology—from the Cretan seven-circuit labyrinth to the Native medicine wheel. Labyrinths are not mazes given that they have one path that winds through a large, complex spiral circle to the centre. In Goddess worship, the labyrinth was the symbol for the Divine Mother or Feminine Principle, the Holy in an alive creation. However, as Lauren Artress (1995) documented, the labyrinth fell into disuse with the shift to Cartesian thought and the intellectualization of religious belief. She argued for the need to reunify reason and image, echoing William Blake, who said that "the enemy of whole vision is reasoning power's divorce from the imagination" (112).

Similarly, Carl Jung's (1973) work was founded on the contention that archetypal images can determine the course of history:

> *An archetype is like an old watercourse along which the water of life has flowed for centuries digging a deep channel in itself. The longer it has flowed in this channel the more likely it is that sooner or later the water will return to its old bed. (1973)*

For Jung, archetypes are primordial images residing in the collective unconscious (the deposit of all previous human experience) which can take innumerable forms over time and space. Most important, the power of archetypes surpasses our rational comprehension and is predominately expressed in metaphors in which "some part of its meaning always remains unknown and defies formulation" (Jacobi, 1959: 31).

This study itself has been a journey through difficult theoretical and methodological passages. What was most unusual was the sense of following two passages simultaneously, particularly the passageway of seeing whole or seeing partial. However, the primary learning was that this tension is to be embraced and the place of paradox to be appreciated for its complexity. As Bohm (1980) suggested in the opening quotation, fragmentary forms of thought have created many of the current crises. This study, therefore, takes up the challenge of "both/and" thinking as a way to move beyond fragmentation. Paradox was used to understand knowledge as whole *and* partial, reality as real *and* constructed, the cosmos as unity *and* diversity, thinking as reason *and* imagination, and adult development as autonomy *and* relatedness.

In the midst of a postmodern ethos, it is anathema to speak of unity or wholeness, given that a key condition of postmodernity is fragmentation. Correspondingly, postmodern theory, with its reaction against totalizing grand narratives, embraces fragmented thinking and partial seeing as its signature. Neither am I satisfied by the fragmented conditions in which we live nor the fragmented thinking that has characterized modernity, including postmodernism. So this study begins with an understanding that there is a whole, that all *is* the whole.

What does "all is the whole" mean? If one is to continue the fragmented thinking that characterizes modernity, then one "analyzes" or interprets the fragments and chooses to "generalize" this (if a modernist) or chooses to present it as partial and contingent (if a postmodernist). If one wishes to partake of a "nonfragmentary worldview," then David Bohm (1980) suggested that we begin with the assumption that reality is undivided, unbroken, and without borders; that reality flows, enfolds, and unfolds, that it contains both consciousness and "external reality" (x).

Therefore, the threads revealed through the research are not understood as fragments that are independent, interdependent or even integrated aspects. Rather, each fragment shall be viewed as containing the "whole," reflecting the whole holographically in each part. A holograph is a three-dimensional picture produced by a split coherent beam of light. Although it is split, the light is still from one source, and it takes on different properties and patterns dependent on how it is viewed. A holographic view of reality is contained within a classic Buddhist sutra: "The heaven of Indra is said to be a network of pearls so arranged that if you look at one you see all the others reflected in it" (Roberts & Amidon, 1991). So it is with each "thing" in the world: It is not merely autonomous but is related to each other "thing" in the world.

Typically, in modern times, we try to discern reality in fragmentary ways, but the attempt here is to look in a "whole" way: to understand that this is one theoretical approach that does not describe reality "as it is" as much as it offers a form of insight into a reality that is implicit and not fully describable or specifiable (Bohm, 1980: 17). In this sense, the labyrinth is an archetype of transformation, but it is only an image of something that is irrepresentable. These visual images of the irrepresentable can provide us with insights into the non-linearity, interrelatedness, and multidimensionality of life—where the dynamic unfolding nature of reality is never fully captured in any theory or narrative. To begin this study, the fragmentary thinking that informs the action research tradition is identified in order to devise new conceptual propositions upon which to design this study.

THE ACTION RESEARCH TRADITION

Action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Carson & Sumara, 1997; Elliott, 1991; McTaggart, 1997) was utilized for this study because it allowed for the study of how understanding develops in the midst of bringing about change—both changes in professional practice and in social relations. As identified in the previous chapter, praxis in social transformation theory connotes the internal relatedness of thinking and action. Action research provides the methodology from which to act in the midst of research and research in the midst of action. Before identifying the fragmentary thinking contained within the action research tradition, it is important to review its purpose and the historical development.

Purpose and Historical Development of Action Research

Action Research as a Response to Positivist Research

Action research is one of a number of research approaches that grew from the limitations of the classical positivist research paradigm. Chafing against the assumption that the social world should be subject to the scientific methods of the physical sciences, three new qualitative research schools developed; broadly, the interpretive, the critical, and the postmodern. All qualitative research methods are predicated on the claims that research within human populations cannot be value neutral, context free, and statistically precise. However, they differ in their approaches to reality, humans, theory, values, evidence, and explanation (Neuman, 2000).

Although these differences coexist in the action research tradition as well, there are two commonalities in all action research approaches. Terrance Carson (1992) identified the first commonality as the belief that we can inform ourselves and deepen our understandings in the midst of enacting change, not just as external observers. The second commonality is that action research engages community members as active subjects in the research, not as passive objects of research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Rather than research being the sole province of formal, university-based researchers, knowledge can be derived through a collaborative process and is a source of power in the hands of common people. Action research, then, challenges both the control of experts over the production of knowledge and the theory/practice divide.

Historically, action research developed along similar trajectories both in the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Many community leaders, teachers, and academics turned to action research as a methodology that would help them systematically investigate issues in the daily activities of their community or workplace. It challenged traditional research in which communities were the recipients of social engineering experiments rather than active creators of their own reality.

Action Research in the North and South

In the South, the failure of Northern-inspired development approaches led to the desire to find knowledge, educational practices, and social action that could transform inherently alienating social structures (de Souza, 1988). The task was to develop social science methods that could break the cultural and epistemological dependency of poor communities in Southern nations (Hall & Kassam, 1985). Eventually called *participatory research*, Pablo Latapi (1988) considered it to have grown out of the popular education practices inspired by Paulo Freire (1970) . Freire's "pedagogy of the oppressed" provided an intellectual milieu for those who did not want to cooperate as instruments of State repression. Just as popular education clearly specified a political commitment to the exploited and oppressed, participatory research was considered a tool to enable the popular classes (working class and peasants) to identify their own issues and generate "popular" knowledge; or rather, knowledge useful for discerning appropriate actions for transforming society toward justice.

Although the term *participatory research* (PR) developed in the South, contributions to the practice of participatory research also came from the "Action Sociology" of the Frankfurt School in Europe that questioned conventional social research (Hall, 1994; Latapi, 1988). Action sociology was utilized in community development work in the North from the mid-20th century and was incorporated into many other disciplines through the concern with redefining and remaking knowledge (Hall, 1981). Kurt Lewin, a German political refugee who emigrated to the U.S., coined the term *action research* (AR) to represent the involvement of participants in systematic observation and reflection (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Carson, 1992). Through deriving deeper insights to guide action in community social change, Lewin saw action research as vital for the preservation of democracy.

An important aspect of action research in both hemispheres that made it appealing to many disciplines was its collective nature. This led to a fusion of terms into the concept of *participatory action research* (PAR). Participatory action research is the "research method of preference whenever a *social practice* is the focus of research activity" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986: 165; *italics in original*). It is one of the most commonly used research methodologies in the critical social sciences, for it ensures that theory is related to practice, that the value of the knowledge benefits those involved in its creation, and that injustice is challenged. PAR also brings communities together—whether by race, class, gender, geography, sexual orientation, physical ability, and/or profession—to collectively analyze and organize to create social change.

In the Northern Hemisphere, groups that experienced domination by the existing knowledge system also sought out knowledge democratization. With access to information more readily accessible in the North, the task among Northern grassroots groups was to reappropriate, not necessarily produce, knowledge for their own needs (Gaventa, 1988). Many groups carried out research that addressed community power structures and corporate practices as well as campaigned for greater public access to information. As Gaventa summarized from his experiences at the Highlander Centre in Appalachia:

> *People may discover for themselves dominant knowledge or interpretations of reality which do not conform to their own experience. . . . Or the process of popular investigation may reveal previously hidden information that does confirm through "official" knowledge what the people have suspected from their own experience. (1988: 21)*

Often, as people developed techniques for gathering information, the empowerment they felt unleashed a social movement around an issue, whether environmental contamination, health risk workplaces, or manipulative labour practices.

Dimensions of Participatory Action Research

Latapi (1988) suggested three dimensions to participatory action research: a research dimension, an educational dimension, and an action dimension. Not only does PAR have an ethical-political dimension and a social action dimension as described above, but it also has a pedagogic function. The pedagogic and research functions are fused when common people learn systematic methods for knowledge generation and thereby produce a popular culture with power to challenge hegemonic systems (de Souza, 1988). Implicit, then, in the process of participatory action research are epistemological and pedagogical assumptions as well as a theory of social transformation (including subtheories of society, consciousness, and mobilization of action).

One epistemological assumption is related in Gramsci's (1999) notion of the organic intellectual,[24] in which every individual has the capacity to be an intellectual and codify knowledge that can challenge existing power structures. PAR attempts to shift the control and creation of knowledge from dominant groups to marginalized groups by privileging the knowledge of local communities, challenging dominant explanations of reality, and providing a medium for analyzing community issues. When outside researchers are involved, they must choose to commit themselves to the interests of the community and help build the indigenous capacity for collective analysis and action (Hall & Kassam, 1985).

Inherent in this assumption is the connection between knowledge and power; there is no "pure" theory, for theory has particular human interests implicit in it (Habermas, 1968). To justify our interests and our related actions we rationalize as individuals and ideologize as a society. Therefore dominant knowledge is always part of the dominant ideology that rationalizes existing relationships—whether classed, raced, or gendered. Only through critical self-reflection can individuals (through psychoanalysis) and groups (through ideology critique) see the interests behind ideologically driven knowledge and judge whether these interests are their own interests. Through this process of critical reflection, suppressed thoughts can be given voice and leaders can rise up organically from within a community to assist in legitimating new knowledge and forumulating new cultural practices. In this way, members of a community become agents of emancipatory change.

Another epistemological assumption is the concept of praxis, in which theory (knowledge) and practice (action) are dialectically related. In other words, there is no sequential duality of first creating knowledge and then acting on it. Rather, knowledge is created as action is taken, and the action itself shapes the knowledge. Freire (1984) warned about mindless activism and empty theorizing that privileges only one aspect. His understanding rests on a Marxian theory of consciousness in which the transformation of social relations is dialectically related to the transformation of consciousness. For instance, dehumanizing beliefs and attitudes such as racism cannot be thought away or talked away, for they are embedded in daily social habits (Allman & Wallis, 1990). Changes in these social relations are evidence of praxis. Such a dialectical approach attempts to focus on the social totality where no one social behaviour can be understood outside of the historical whole that has created it (Ritzer, 1988).

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[24] The Italian social activist and intellectual, Antonio Gramsci, used the notion of organic intellectual to denote when leadership arises from within the actual situation faced by workers and peasants and refers to their capacity to gather and analyze knowledge in the struggle to counter the dominant groups. Freire also considered middle class intellectuals radicalized to the interests of the subordinated group as a kind of organic intellectual (Hall, 1981).

One pedagogical assumption is the "pedagogy of the question" and how questions generate critique and bind theory and practice. Shirley Grundy (1990) applied Habermas's schema to educational action research and suggested that there are three pedagogical elements: theoretical elements, processes of enlightenment, and processes of action. The theoretical elements are the propositions about the character and conduct of social life. These include analyses of social conditions derived by the community as a better explanation of their reality, which can stand up to "scientific" discourse. These are the processes of enlightenment. The educator-researcher provides a space for learner-researchers to carry out a social critique of their reality and develop explanations by distancing from daily action temporarily. Through free and open dialogue, individuals can test out their viewpoints against the views of others and against "formal" theory. Then they can also test them out by acting on them in the social conditions in which they find themselves. The definition of action, then, is not behaviour that is unreflected and habitual, but conscious action related to questioning and designed to solve a practical issue.

Key Issues in Participatory Action Research

Despite these enunciated assumptions of action research, there is much possibility for manipulation to occur and for emancipation to be appearance only. Therefore, democratic relations among all research participants is imperative to ensure communication free from compulsion (Ritzer, 1988). In this way, knowledge ought to be consensually arrived at through rational discussion or what Habermas called the *ideal speech situation*. Feminist sociologists have expanded on this notion by proposing that finding the truth of any situation is the point of intersection between competing viewpoints and knowledge systems (Smith; as cited in Ritzer, 1988). Truth in a feminist dialectic is not a unilateral claim but a balancing and weighing of accounts of reality. This, then, is the importance of *participatory* action research: It is a collaborative process that validates multiple personal and shared viewpoints. There are other key issues in PAR.

Is Participatory Action Research . . . Research?

Drawing from the writings of Jurgen Habermas, the educational action researchers Carr and Kemmis (1986), as well as many Southern researchers, have posed the key question of "how can the rigor of scientific knowledge be maintained while determining what is right and just in a given situation?" In other words, what makes action research "scientific" research, and what criteria are used to judge what are right and just social actions? Although the task of PAR is to reintegrate questions of ethics and justice into social science and apply this knowledge to everyday acts, these questions represent both the strength and vulnerability of action research. What makes PAR a research process is dependent upon the research paradigm utilized.

Conchelos and Kassam (1981) contended that some action researchers clearly use the basic premises and processes of traditional scientific inquiry, such as data gathering and analysis. This is a more positivistic understanding of action research that argues that common-sense knowledge is inconsistent and unsystematic. Special norms, scientific attitudes, and techniques are required to produce rigorous understandings that are valid, reliable, and generalizable. Validity and reliability are hinged on the development of causal laws to explain a certain phenomenon in which the central task is theory building.

Another approach seeks to understand the common sense that guides people's daily living because it contains the meaning systems they use to construct their understandings and patterns of social interaction. This is an interpretive understanding of research that judges its dependability, trustworthiness, and authenticity by the text's ability to resonate with the actors and readers. The text has the ability to portray the ambiguity and multiple layers of meaning present in any social practice. This approach has been criticized for its lack of attention to catalyzing effective social-level actions beyond an enhancement of individual understanding.

Still others argued that it is not just systematic data analysis or understandings of meaning systems that make PAR "research-like." Rather, it is the control over knowledge generation for the purpose of those involved and to provide broader explanations of social reality. This critical approach considers both the determinism of social structures and the voluntarism of individual agents present in any social situation, for people's subjectivities have been shaped by these broader social forces, so research processes need to attend to both levels.

Patti Lather (1991; as cited in Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994) developed the notion of catalytic validity to suggest that the criterion of action research as research is the ability to identify the unseen levers of social relations that catalyze actors to control and shape their own destiny. The ultimate goal of critical action research is to stimulate a self-sustaining process of critical analysis and enlightened action.

However, this approach is charged with favouring action over theory building. Budd Hall (as cited in Conchelos & Kassam, 1981) argues that when theory and practice are considered dialectically, then there are a number of foundations for theory building. Although PAR emphasizes "systematic collective analysis of problems and refinement of interpretation," it also is concerned with theory building in relationship to practice (Hall; as cited in Conchelos & Kassam, 1981).

What Are the Criteria for Understanding?

The question of interpreting the meaning constructs of individuals and social systems in PAR parallels many of the above debates. Hermeneutics is the theory and philosophy of the interpretation of meaning emanating from the ancient Greek word *hermeneia*. It originally referred to the Greek god Hermes, who was to make the obscure desires of the gods clear for mortals. In classical times, hermeneutics was used as a way to interpret classical poetry for the purpose of drawing wisdom from it (Gallagher, 1992). Subsequently, it was used as systematic exegesis for the interpretation of biblical texts to understand the deeper level of meaning, particularly what the original author intended. From these historical roots, hermeneutics is understood as not only concerning the written text and the language used therein, but also necessarily involving unwritten text, such as social processes, human existence, and Being itself (Gallagher, 1992). In sum, hermeneutics enables the complex building of bridges between reader, text, and author within historical and contemporary social processes.

According to Shaun Gallagher (1992), the four approaches to hermeneutics are conservative, moderate, critical, and radical; paralleling the positivist, interpretive, critical, and postmodern approaches to social science. Gallagher proposed that there are three impasses or aporias contained within the literature on hermeneutics that concern

- the ability to reproduce the original meanings of the author (the Betti/Gadamer debate),
- the ability to move beyond constrained communication to a position of ideological freedom (the Gadamer/Habermas debate), and
- the conflict between a "hermeneutics of trust" that relies on good will in a conversation and a "hermeneutics of suspicion" that is skeptical of the authority relations embedded in surface-level meaning (the Gadamer/Habermas/Derrida debate.

Hans Smits (1997) added two more aporias: the aporia of theory/practice, in which the linear application of theory to practice does not adequately address ethical questions within unique contexts; and the aporia of ethics, in which the loss of ethical and normative standards within unifying narratives has left practitioners vulnerable to instrumental orientations. These last two aporias are described below within the discussion of the difficulties of practicing action research.

What Are the Criteria for Action?

The criteria of what constitutes action is highly problematic within the action research literature. As Shirley Grundy (1990) argued, action research can be in the service of a variety of worldviews.[25] The first mode of action in action research is *techne*, drawing from Aristotle's notion of the craftsperson's action that is the "making" as part of a skill, craft, or art. In other words, action is the direct result of an image or idea that preexists the action in the mind of the craftsperson and is brought to fruition by the skills of the maker. Technical action research then is product centred and assists a practitioner in more effectively implementing ideas into practice. This comes closest to an instrumental use of action research in which the participants are persuaded to an idea and become relegated to the position of instruments rather than agents of change.

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[25] While Grundy only discusses three modes of action research, a fourth mode of postmodernism is discussed later in the chapter.

The second mode of action research is *phronesis*, or creating the conditions for moral action. This mode is predicated on the "knowing-why" rather than the "knowing-how" of technical action research. Gadamer (1975) contended that the purpose of knowledge is to identify and use practical judgement to determine "fitting" action (36). By combining knowledge and judgement, a researcher/educator is involved in a discernment process, and therefore it is a process-centered form of research. Rather than seeking the "right" action, it is seeking the "good" action which incorporates an ethical and moral consciousness as well as activates the actor's store of practical wisdom. However, this mode can be subject to self-deception or the action can be self-defeating when the broader societal constraints on action are not considered.

The third mode of action research is emancipatory, in which the action is identifying the structural change needed to more fully implement the "good" action. It looks to the social relations and organizational structures that prevent change and thus demands strategic action by a collaborative group. However, if the idea and strategic action are "sold" to the group rather than the group engaging in a reflective process to arrive at an idea, then emancipation dissolves into *techne*. In this situation, there is no gain in self-determination, no enhanced ability to determine ethical action *in situ*, and no shift in power relationships.

What Are the Criteria for Right and Just Actions?

The criteria of what constitutes right and just action in action research is highly problematic. Many theorists have tried to pin down criteria for judging an action as right and just. As Ray Morrow (1993) has indicated, any theory committed to social change is guided by normative orientations that posit an ideal society and ideal human.

However, for Jurgen Habermas (1993), normative claims that discuss ideal forms cannot be relied upon because they are always context specific. Further, he contended that the Gadamerian interpretive approach most often produces uncritical understandings in terms of the larger power relationships that have shaped individual subjectivity. For Habermas, it relegates hermeneutics to an art, as Gadamer himself claimed, rather than a systematic method that can provide a conclusive way to discern when a true understanding has been reached; it thereby assumes a position of continual relativism. In response, Habermas developed a "discourse ethics" which attempts to reconstruct a moral point of view from which normative claims can be impartially judged. He postulated a procedure for moral argumentation in which

> *only those norms may claim to be valid that could meet with the consent of all affected in their role as participants in a practical discourse. . . . Argumentation insures that all concerned in principle take part, freely and equally, in a cooperative search for truth, where nothing coerces anyone except the force of the better argument. (197-198)*

Feminist poststructuralists have roundly criticized the "freely and equally" criteria within Habermas' (1993) moral argumentation by asserting that these ideal conditions cannot be met in reality. For them, the objective of ideal conditions is illusory, and the need to find a universal standard of truth as well as the need to ground theory in a scientific rationality results in "totalizing narratives" that rely on male-centric and Euro-centric rationalities. Critical theory, as reflected in critical action research, is focussed on a unitary subject, rationalist critique, male concept of citizenship, and conceptual individualism (Gore, 1993). Through their empirical research, Jennifer Gore, Elizabeth Ellsworth, Patti Lather, Maxine Green, and others (1992) asserted that each person has a multiplicity of identities and is variously situated. No one discourse could arrive at an explanation of reality or subjectivity or could capture the complex, layered nature of social practices, the multiplicities of identity, or the paradoxes within social activity. No one research method could capture the web of interconnected human relations and often result in overgeneralizations—particularly the experience of men to all people.

In addition, the cognitive illness of modernism, as Joe Kincheloe (1993) termed it, has etched too firm a boundary between thinking and feeling, between logic and intuition. He advocated postformal thinking that understands cognitive action as a "way of life" that reincorporates the ignored aspects of human life, including the personal, the intuitive, the imaginative, the playful, and the emotional (27-28; Neuman, 2000). Extending thinking to empathy for the entire realm of life that surrounds us can stoke the social imagination that is currently confined to Newtonian cause-effect linearity, absolutism, certainty, and modernist reductionism. The task is to carry out an etymology of cultural constructions in the modern era—or what Foucault called a genealogy of knowledge—regarding how people govern themselves and others through the production of knowledge. In particular, he is concerned with the micropolitics of power within the knowledge production process that oppresses and represses certain parts of the population by constituting their subjectivity and normalizing certain social practices.

Through this intersection between feminist and postmodern social research, the criteria that emerges for right and just actions is to question the question itself. The purpose of Foucault (Gallagher, 1992) is to radically transform and even dismantle social science itself, for it is a process that continues to reinforce power relations and bureaucratic, disciplinary forms of control. As Rosenau (1992) explained:

> *Almost all postmodernists reject truth as even a goal or ideal because it is the very epitome of modernity. . . . Truth makes reference to order, rules, and values; depends on logic, rationality and reason, all of which the postmodernists question. (77)*

The limits of research, then, are reached because social science can never truly represent what occurs in the social world—the full diversity and complexity that is constantly changing. It is simply a process of peeling off more and more layers or, rather, deconstructing social practices. It is continuing to question the question (Neuman, 2000; Ritzer, 1988).

Charlene Spretnak (1999) and many others are not satisfied with this postmodern refusal to determine right and just action. Using what she called *restructive* or *ecological* postmodernism, she identified deconstructionist postmodernisms as *most* modern, for they extend the disembodied, disembedded, and decontextualized conditions of hypermodernity. It continues the fragmented thinking of the modern age. She suggested that a truly postmodern alternative would counter the modern ideological flight from body, nature, and place, including the subtle interrelatedness of the cosmos. The criteria for right and just action for her is retrieving "the real" back from the postmodern edge of all reality as constructed, "mere" narrative, "mere" myth.

Spretnak (1999) suggested that myth is not vacuous storytelling but communion with the deepest truths of existence, which she believes exist. She drew this conclusion through her research into the convergence between the New Science and many ancient spiritual traditions. The most mythic drama is the birth of the universe that is a story of creative process, constitutive relationship, and a unitive ground of being (183). The criteria of right and just action is recentering human life into a cosmological story and enabling reconnectedness with body, nature, and place. Reality, then, is ultimately mysterious with facets as yet unknown. What are the implications of enacting such a stance in action research, particularly educational action research?

Difficulties of Action Research in the Education Field

Action research in the education field began when it intersected with the reflective practitioner movement in the North. Reflection was encouraged in the field of teacher professional development as well as in the curriculum and school reform movements. In the 1950s, Stephen Corey encouraged teachers to reflect on their practice and to take action according to their new knowledge gained by systematic reflection. However, teachers lacked the time and skill to carry out action research. Those who tried to create change found many of their actions impotent because they did not challenge the larger social structures in which they worked. Given this, action research lay dormant in North America from the late 1950s to the early 1970s.

John Elliott (1991) and many of his British colleagues saw the potential of the teacher-as-researcher movement to assist in curriculum reform during the 1960s. They did not understand it as action research, but they "intuitively grasped . . . the concept of teaching as reflexive practice . . . a form of educational inquiry . . . [in which] learning is viewed as the active production not the passive reproduction of meaning (8). In practice, Elliott began to note several key issues that revolved around his role as an academic. First, academics often hijacked the knowledge generated by teachers into academic jargon and promoted a detached, contemplative culture for reflection as the ideal. Second, rather than supporting teacher reflection, academics actually undermined the capacity for self-reflection and teacher autonomy by raising questions of practice that busy practitioners could not address through their own independent data base. Third, there were significant losses of self-esteem when teachers became self-monitoring. The insights he gained were that the theory-practice divide was alive and well in educational action research.

This led Elliott (1991) to determine that the fundamental aim of action research is to improve practice, not to produce knowledge. He advocated moving away from the theory-driven, technical rationality of action research toward an ethically based action research that he considered a "moral science" (52) by fostering practical wisdom. He perceived the redeeming quality of action research to be the capacity to build collaborative reflection among practitioners as a form of creative resistance, not oppositional resistance to structural constraints.

It was the Australian action research movement that enacted the possibility of action research for school transformation. In their seminal work, *Becoming Critical*, Carr and Kemmis (1986) broadened the dimensions of action research for professional development by seeing it as the study of "ideas-in-action," in which social theory is necessarily involved in any professional practice and, in this case, in teacher curriculum theorizing. For them, issues that arise in an individual's teaching practice are social matters that require collective dialogue and action, not just the practical judgement of one teacher within one classroom. They challenged the "teacher-as-researcher" movement by suggesting that changes in curriculum theorizing necessitated corresponding changes in the organizational structures of schools and in the teaching profession at large, once again rooting action research within the critical tradition.

However, those attempting to apply action research according to the Carr and Kemmis (1986) model encountered many difficulties, which left many unanswered questions. For instance, Terrance Carson (1992) attempted to apply critically minded action research through collaborative dialogues among classroom teachers with the intent of implementing peace education, based on the model developed by Toh Swee-Hin and Virginia Floresca-Cawagas (1987). He and the teachers were frustrated in four ways, leading Carson to question the theory-driven nature of action research, as did Elliott (1991).

First, Carson (1992) found a conflict between the critical consciousness and the pedagogical sensitivity of a teacher. In one case, a teacher chose a "tactful" action in the interests of building hope among children rather than the hopelessness that would be fostered through a critical social analysis. Carson's experience was that emancipatory possibilities are not always self-evident in an ideology critique. Another teacher's experience highlighted feelings of powerlessness when teachers face alienating administrative practices. Although the teacher was supported in the action research group outside the school, support was not necessarily available within the school to help bring about peaceful school structures. Third, it became clear that the commitment to a focus such as peace education can be an profoundly alienating experience for teachers who finds themselves isolated socially and intellectually within the school. A commitment to "peace" can actually create a breach in community, not a building of community. Fourth, deriving an action research project can be difficult when a practitioner is not sure what changes could happen, particularly when the "agenda" of peace education is so broad and no one idea can holistically address the issues. The key issues in theory do not necessarily connect to the requirements of an "action plan" at a micro level. From these experiences of complexity and ambiguity, Carson challenged action researchers to cross the postmodern divide.

Carson (1993) considered postmodern social science (predicated on the work of Borgmann, 1992) to transcend the theory-practice and knowledge-control issues by identifying the more fundamental issue of lack of hope. The lack of hope emanates from the loss of competence to judge between good and bad that constitutes the postmodern condition (Norris, 1990; as cited in Carson, 1993). Carson defined action research as an ethical activity and embraced Borgmann's notion of "postmodern realism" as holding great potential for a postmodern practice of action research. Such a practice would concentrate on the focally real—"those things that of themselves have engaged mind and body and centred our lives" and create a feeling of kinship (119, 122). The focally real resembles Charlene Spretnak's (1999) ideas by enabling the recentering of human life on the "middle region of physical reality"—outside of technology (a hypermodernism characterized by hyperreality, hyperactivity, and hyperintelligence) and commodity (commodious individualism).

This led Carson and Dennis Sumara (1997) to reconceptualize action research as living practice. Living practice attends to the way the investigation and investigator co-emerge;, reveals the complexity of relations; is situated within holistic, not prescriptive practices; is critically astute as to how modernist concepts shape the normalizing practices of institutions and structures; and practices research as deep awareness of being, not a product or method. Action research as living practice occurs when "who one *is* becomes completely caught up with what one knows and does" (xvii;

emphasis in original). This moves from the fragmented thought that characterizes all other forms of action research. From this theoretical and methodological platform, then, the following propositions frame the design of this study.

A PEDAGOGY OF HOPE AND A RESEARCH OF LIVING PRACTICE: THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSITIONS

> *The challenge to both men and women is to invent new myths. People are changed, not by intellectual convictions or ethical urgings, but by transformed imaginations. (Madonna Kolbenschlag cited in Hampson & Whalen, 1991).*

Seeing whole, as David Bohm (1980) suggested, is to assume that reality is undivided and without borders. This is not the creation of an essentializing or totalizing narrative, but a storytelling that honors mystery and the irrepresentable with humility as well as searches for nonfragmentary "both/and" thinking. The pedagogy I would design was predicated on the following concepts of societal transformation theory: historically situated critique, praxis, pedagogy of hope, dialogue, inseparability of education and politics, inseparability of pedagogy and research, and explicit normative orientations. Based on the some of the critiques above, I derived 10 additional theoretical and methodological propositions that inform my research and pedagogical process. The next chapter describes the design of the study and how some of the propositions changed while I was engaged in the process.

Societal Transformation and the Middle Class

This study challenges critical transformative learning theory by situating the process among the middle class[26] rather than a disenfranchised group. It is proposed that there are significant alienations among this societal sector that offer the potential for a transformative praxis. It may be that these alienations go beyond class, race, gender, and other differences to a cosmological, epistemological, and ontological alienation.

The first proposition for reconstructing transformative learning, then, is to engage members of the middle class, upon the supposition that the middle class desires transformation and is a critical mass for societal change. This study questions Freire's (1987) contention that the middle class does not necessarily have the dream of being transformed. It also challenges the dominant analyses that the middle class is in a moral malaise prompted by narcissistic individualism and resulting in crisis denial. These analyses assert that the middle class has retreated from a vigorous dialogical political culture. Yet, this analysis contradicts the middle-class adult learners in my classes who assert that they are masters of their own destiny and that they desire transformation. Are they ideologically duped, or does their historical and class position require a more penetrating analysis? What is it that they want transformation from and toward?

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[26] Defined in Chapter Five.

This study shall examine these contradictory assertions about the middle class to draw insights into the sources of political paralysis *and* political power. It draws upon other pedagogies for the nonpoor (Evans, Evans, & Kennedy, 1987) that have struggled to understand the ideological condition of the nonpoor and more appropriate educational processes for engaging these conditions. Ultimately, it is hoped that the findings will offer possibilities for revitalizing citizen action and repopulating the "naked public square."

Situating the study among the middle class did not require that I be a "border crosser" into a minority group, because I am of middle-class origin myself. It did require, however, a deeper cultural self-reflexivity.

A Hermeneutics of Trust and Suspicion

The second proposition was to posit both a hermeneutics of trust and a hermeneutics of suspicion by trusting the ethical desire for "the good" among the nonpoor but also being suspicious of the larger unseen constraints upon their action for "the good." As Charles Taylor (1989) has expressed:

> *We come to one of the most basic aspirations of human beings, the need to be connected to, or in contact with, what they see as good, or of crucial importance, or of fundamental value . . . in order to make minimal sense of our lives, in order to have an identity, we need an orientation to the good. (43, 47)*

Over and over I saw and heard the good intentions of ordinary middle-class people regarding the serious social and ecological issues present in our society. Yet, it was clear that a new social order would not be built on pedagogies that generate guilt, fear, or despair. New social relations might be engendered, however, through shifted perceptual boundaries that clearly name the psychosocial structures.[27] These psychosocial structures are examined for their power to perpetuate the multiple alienations and fatalisms of the nonpoor and for their possible intrinsic nature to their material position. Therefore, the task is to identify the contradictions and constraints that prevent acting for "the good" and thereby move beyond the notion of the individual as autonomous.

Cognitive Rationality and Beyond

A third proposition is to incorporate and move beyond "cognitive illness" by assessing the resonance of specific metaphors and images that offer an orientation to the good. As Canadian critical theologian Gregory Baum (as cited in Evans, 1987) stated, "Utopian imagination makes people sensitive to the breaking points of the present system and nourishes in them a longing for a new kind of society, and as such exercises a significant role in social change" (246). For the formation of hope, Taylor (1987) suggested that

> *we need new languages of personal resonance to make crucial human goods alive for us again. . . . As great as the power of naturalist [moral] sources might be, the potential of a certain theistic perspective is incomparably greater. (513, 518, 519)*

Within the mass, eclectic yearnings for "the spiritual," it was hypothesized that a new space exists in which to develop a normative system that re-images right relationship and "the good." The task is not only to empirically reconstruct the normative frameworks of the participants, but also to determine the impact of new symbolic systems or stories. To do this, a holistic concept of sustainability will be the key axis around which the pedagogy revolves. Various images and metaphors will be presented, and then their power in captivating the attention and imagination of the participants will be assessed. Finally, an archetypal analysis will be carried out that will try to locate what archetypes the participants themselves are in touch with throughout the research process.

The research will also pay attention to the emotional dynamics of the participants to understand how their knowing/acting is shaped by emotions. What is typically missing from the literature on transformation is evidence that the birth of something is accompanied by the death of something—perhaps old understandings, ways of seeing, and patterns of living/working. Therefore, this proposition is to understand transformation not just as a cognitive transformation or an additive process to what already exists, but also as a grieving and an experience of loss (Scott, 1997). Evans (1987) identified three basic movements in transformation:

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[27] Freire refers to this as a type of cultural, political, social, and economic psychoanalysis (1987: 224).

- reduction of resistance to change (openness),
- letting go or relinquishment (death and grieving), and
- active participation in changing structures (hope).

While this study is not seeking to understand the "stages" of transformation, it will attempt to identify dimensions of transformation ensuring that loss and grieving are not overlooked.

A Pedagogy of Engagement: Beyond Prescriptions and Reconstructibility

In understanding much of transformation theory as embedded in the modernist development paradigm with its "linear and controlling connotations" (Schapiro, 1995: 31), the fourth proposition is to move beyond instrumentalist projects, utopian prescriptions, and personal/societal reconstructibility. Schapiro elaborated:

> *I suppose the central moral dilemma of being an educator is that one is in the business of trying to change other people and that therefore a relation of power is formed that is unavoidable. . . . Clearly, the idea of a liberating consciousness must be called into question when the intention is not to allow things to take their own course but rather to bend that consciousness in line with "national objectives. (43, 42)*

This quotation highlights the issue of authoritarian teaching that does not allow the free engagement of the participants with the content and process. It also highlights the issues of trying to transform someone else. This study shall involve a pedagogy of engagement that, according to Briton (1996):

> *alerts adults to the impersonal forces of modernity that are denying them the right to make responsible decisions and stripping them of their dignity, and engages adults in democratic practices as well as provide them with the communicative and critical competencies to resist the further systematization of culture... and [establish] just and equitable communities of citizens. (115)*

Although this study will posit a critique of modernity and the normative ideal of a just, equitable, and sustainable society, it is the interaction of the participants with these ideas that is of interest. These principles will be examined for resonance with the concerns of the participants and the realities of this geographic place. Through dialogical action research, the participants will join me in identifying whether sustainability holds the potential to transform their daily lives and society in compelling directions.

A Pedagogy of Hope and Radical Love

Out of such questioning of the modernist assumptions in transformation arises the fifth proposition of enacting a pedagogy of hope and radical love as constitutive of transformed social relations. When Freire (1970) discussed a dramatic commitment of educators to the liberation of the poor, he used the term *conversion*, or *metanoia*—a change in heart or rebirth which is the ultimate reversal of spirit. Gustavo Gutierrez (as cited in Welton, 1993), a prominent liberation theologian, explained:

> *Conversion means a radical transformation of ourselves . . . to be converted is to commit oneself to the process of the liberation of the poor and oppressed, to commit oneself lucidly, realistically, and concretely, . . . know[ing] that the center of gravity is outside ourselves. (116)*

My commitment as a researcher, then, is to be open to the human relationships that develop during the research process. It is to fiercely protect the space created so that participants are supported through difficult transitions. Like Welton, my commitment is a realization that perhaps an ultimate norm for individuals and society lies beyond history. Yet, this faith stance does not bypass ideological critique, but surpasses the rationalism and perfectionism implicit in secular humanism by moving toward the mysterious domain of the human spirit. Although both Freire and Gutierrez discussed radical love as the stance of the educator/pastoral worker, it could also be described as

> *the mystical nature of the relationship they enter into with their learners [and the learners with each other], . . . a creative space, . . . the sphere of the imagination, . . . the realm of the sacred. . . . It is in this encounter with others that we continuously awaken to the meaning of life. (Schapiro, 1995: 45)*

Within this research there will be an awareness of the power of encounter in which insistent questioning of personal and social experiences is held within compassionate, committed relationships. Perhaps this level of commitment can challenge institutional and other structural confinements and manifest transformed social relations.

Such a stance of radical love is also related to a pedagogy of hope. As Joanna Macy (1983) has related, the common knowledge we share about the planetary perils and human misery of our time can beget a sense of despair and immobilization. Rather than repressing this despair, she advocated moving through it and keeping hope alive through the process. Similarly, Freire (1997a) identified the purpose of educators as to "intervene," not as a betrayal of democracy through imposition, but in the service of democracy that enables learners to become curious, to become unsettled, and to decipher the limit situations of why things are the way they are (105-106). Throughout this analysis is the need to "unveil opportunities for hope" and counter the submission to futility. Hope for Freire (1997b) is the dream of "a less ugly society, one that is less evil and more humane, . . . more people-oriented" (104), yet is it not "so much the certainty of the *find*, but my movement in *search*" (106), for it is the search that generates the hope.

Ethical Transformation

The sixth proposition is reconceptualizing transformation as ethical in that it anticipates an enlargement of the sense of self. A review of the literature on ethical formation revealed that one key aspect is the constantly expanding boundaries of the self. I am hypothesizing that an ethical transformation is a shift in the notion of the good in which the external becomes part of oneself and there is a change in the ground of ethical thinking. As Taylor (1989) specified, there is an essential link between selfhood/identity and an orientation in moral space—defining what is important to oneself and what is not. Guindon (1992) discussed five ethical stances that are expected to be overlapping:

- hedonistic ethics questing for pleasure and avoidance of pain;
- utilitarian ethics questioning for individual satisfaction within maximized public happiness;
- loyalty ethics questing for attachment and solidarity with a group cause;
- legalistic ethics questing after fulfilling social obligations, humanist ethics questing after human dignity, and the critical discernment of a social organization's fostering of dignity; and
- response ethics, which is the relativization of the ego-self in which the boundaries of the self fade and a sense of union "with the universe" is present.

This response ethics is portrayed in every faith tradition. For instance, Gustavo Gutierrez (1973), quoting Bonhoeffer, elaborated this ethical stance:

> *Freedom is not something man has for himself but something he has for others. . . . It is . . . a relationship and nothing else. Being free means "being free for the other'" where one loses oneself and his or her selfishness in service [or solidarity with] the other. (36)*

It is proposed, therefore, that an ethical transformation entailing an enlargement of the sense of self is the bridge between individualism and social responsibility.

Embodiedness and Embeddedness

Consistent with Spretnak's (1999) ideas of connecting with a knowing body, a creative cosmos, and a complex sense of place, the seventh proposition is to ensure that the pedagogy incorporates mindfulness exercises that heighten the participants' awareness of bodily responses and experiences as well as their awareness of the natural world. Through exercises and speakers who take the learners out into the natural world, it is expected that several connections begin to occur—that the anthropocentrism that blocks the view of a larger living world softens, that individuals engage their inner spirituality in conditions of silence and peace, and that a curiosity about natural processes, an Earth literacy, is stimulated. Readings about the new cosmos creation story and creation theology perhaps prod new understandings of the human place in the cosmos, a living cosmos. Building on the work of Thomas Berry, an ecofeminist adult educator, Darlene Clover (Clover, Follen, & Hall, 1998) suggested that changing the social construction of "nature" can assist adults in reweaving themselves into the living processes that surround them—a participative biocentrism (216). It will also connect to the social constructions of gender and the experience of body in an industrialized world (Clover, Follen, & Hall, 1998).

Generative Issues as Pedagogical Entry Points

The eighth proposition is to carry out background research that can identify generative issues and thus appropriate pedagogical entry points. It was hypothesized that the entry points lie where pain, vulnerability, despair, and frustration are. To avoid the fear/guilt/crisis approach, the researcher will try to identify trigger words that resonate with the middle-class consciousness and attract them to such a transformative learning experience. It is expected that if they see the course as a way to deal with pressing living and working issues, they will engage with a systematic pedagogy of critique and hope.

Linking Knowledge and Social Power

The ninth proposition is to address the gap between a transformed consciousness and transformative action. As Shor (1992) bluntly put it, "Knowledge is not exactly power. Knowledge is the power to know, to understand, but not necessarily the power to do or to change" (6). Therefore, as a form of dialectical praxis, the study shall deliberately establish linkages between the adult education classroom and social movements so that new knowledge is also the power of being able to change social conditions. By utilizing the format of an immersion experience, participants come into contact with individuals who are part of a local social movement and who are living out new social alternatives. It is anticipated that this helps to sculpt images of social possibilities and establish ongoing supportive networks, a sign of transformed social relations. Perhaps this process can take the educative process beyond the end of a formal classroom process and provide the avenues for collective political activities, a reinvention of power.

The pedagogy shall also draw on the transformative pedagogy found in global education theory enacted in public school classrooms. As Toh & Floresca-Cawagas (1987, 1990) have elaborated in their framework of global/peace education, the approach must be a holistic one that studies the interconnections between the issues of militarization, structural violence, human rights, cultural solidarity, environmental care, and personal peace in a educational space of compassion and empowerment. They advocated not only activity in local social movements, but also the building of international partnerships in which those in the North and South are enriched through dialogue and the practice of solidarity.

A Research of Living Practice

The tenth and final proposition is that this research will be a living practice; that it is not a thing, but a "set of relations among persons, their histories, their current situations, their dreams, their fantasies, their desires" (Carson & Sumara, 1997: xx). It is a moving cultural form that emanates from the living of it, not a technical, instrumentalist practice. As a living practice it has the capacity to transform all who are involved in it, including myself, as we engage ourselves, each other, and the world around us.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSITIONS

In summary, this framework will assist in empirically studying the impact of reconceptualizing transformative learning. This study attends to the various theoretical and methodological issues raised through the following 10 propositions: that it situates the study among the middle class; posits a hermeneutics of trust and suspicion; attends to normative symbols, emotions, and archetypes as well as cognitive knowledge; involves a pedagogy of engagement rather than prescriptive visions of reconstructibility; enacts a pedagogy of hope and radical love; attends to the ethical aspects of transformation, facilitates embodiedness and embeddedness, identifies generative issues to reveal appropriate pedagogical entry points, links knowledge and social power through praxis; and considers this research study as living practice. It was expected that these propositions would be shaped and transformed throughout the process of investigation, but they are recorded as the baseline understandings upon which I designed the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

TRANSFORMING WORKING AND LIVING:
DESIGNING AND INITIATING THE STUDY

> *It is our main task now—as it always was—to resuscitate social relations, opposition, defiance, struggle and hope where they have been crushed, distorted or stifled by order, which is always the order of the state. It is not enough simply to denounce the order; one must show that it is not all-powerful, one must rediscover the spring hidden beneath the cement, the word beneath the silence, the questioning beneath the ideology. (Touraine, 1985: 55)*

INTRODUCTION

Although this study is situated within the wider theoretical discussion of transformative learning and the methodological discussions within action research, the heart of the study is developing a learning process and assessing empirically its impact on the participants. The development of such a learning process was very much shaped by my contact with adult learners prior to this study. Through their collective insights into the world where they work and live, various pedagogical processes and content were developed to respond to their experiences. As I honed my listening and responses as an educator, a unique action research design emerged that also incorporated the propositions presented in the previous chapter.

DESIGNING THE STUDY

The action research process, particularly for the investigation of professional practice, is the generally accepted model of a "spiral of cycles" from Kurt Lewin's model (Elliott, 1991; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). These action research phases are shown in Figure 1 on the following page. This process is similar to the participatory action research "phases" as outlined by Budd Hall (1981) and generally used in community development. It is also similar to the hermeneutic or pastoral social analysis circle used in liberation theology (Holland & Henriot, 1985), both of which are combined in Figure 2 on the following pages.

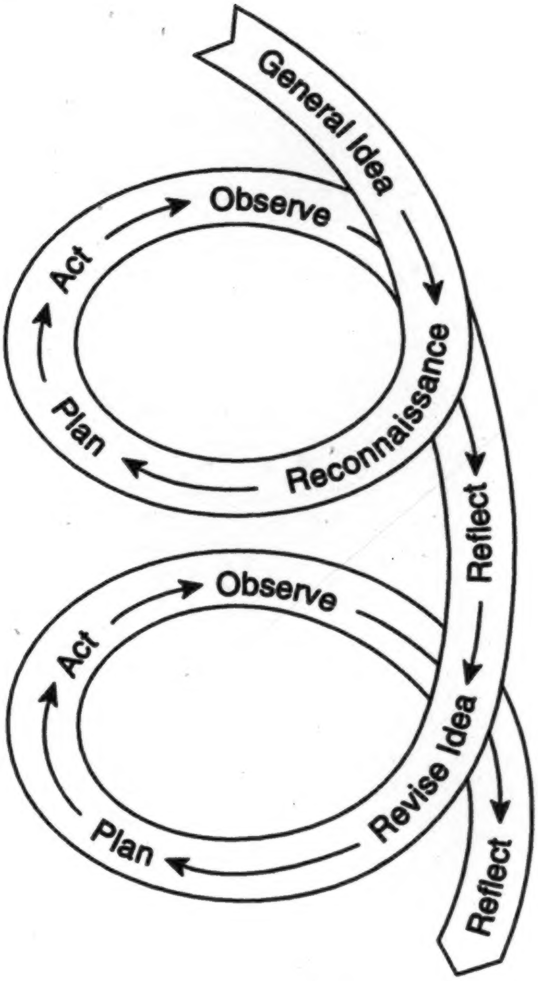
General Idea
Observe
Act
Reconnaissance
Plan
Reflect
Observe
Act
Revise Idea
Plan
Reflect

Figure 1. Traditional action research spiral.

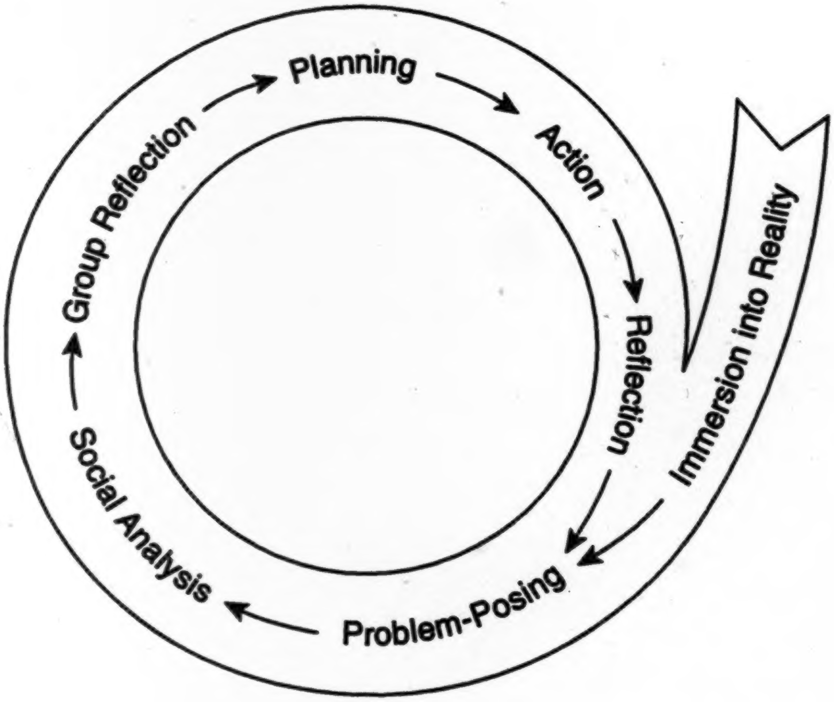
Planning
Action
Reflection
Immersion into Reality
Problem-Posing
Social Analysis
Group Reflection

Figure 2. Participatory action research circle.

After reviewing these variations in action research processes, I understood this study both as an investigation of my own professional practice and as an engagement of a group of people in an analysis of their work within the global economy in the pursuit of new possibilities. However, it was not until the end of the study that it was clear that I had utilized a double spiral action research study in which the action research of the group was embedded in the study of my own professional practice as an educator. Both inductively (responding to my teaching experiences) and deductively (responding to the above theories), the double spiral process emerged and is illustrated in Figure 3 on the following page and discussed at length in the next chapter. In sum, it was a parallel process of learning and inquiry, with the added researcher responsibility of observing the impact of the course and interpreting participant responses. This chapter describes the first two steps of the double spiral action research process, that of my own immersion/problem posing and pedagogy planning. The following chapter, Chapter Five, illustrates how the next three research phases of act/observe and reflect/interpret were intertwined with the participants' own initial problem posing and their reflection throughout the pedagogical process. Their individual and group feedback throughout led to revising the course, revising my research conclusions, and then eventually replanning the second offering of the course. Chapters Six and Seven describe the participants' initial problem posing that enabled the identification of several pedagogical entry points. Chapter Eight describes the impact of the pedagogical experiences on the participants and discusses the actions they took throughout the course and after the completion of the course. Chapters Nine and Ten detail the research findings emanating from my reflection and interpretation.

Researcher Immersion and Problem Posing

The first phase of the action research model was my own immersion and problem posing. I surveyed the cultural waters in which I lived as part of a systematic and intensive immersion in my own cultural and economic reality. As I taught various adult education classes, I experimented with various learning activities that challenged my usual theory-driven practice and elicited questions as well as cultural analysis from the learners to ascertain general themes of concern. As indicated in Chapter One, the key issue that preoccupied the minds of the learners was work and how it shapes their living.

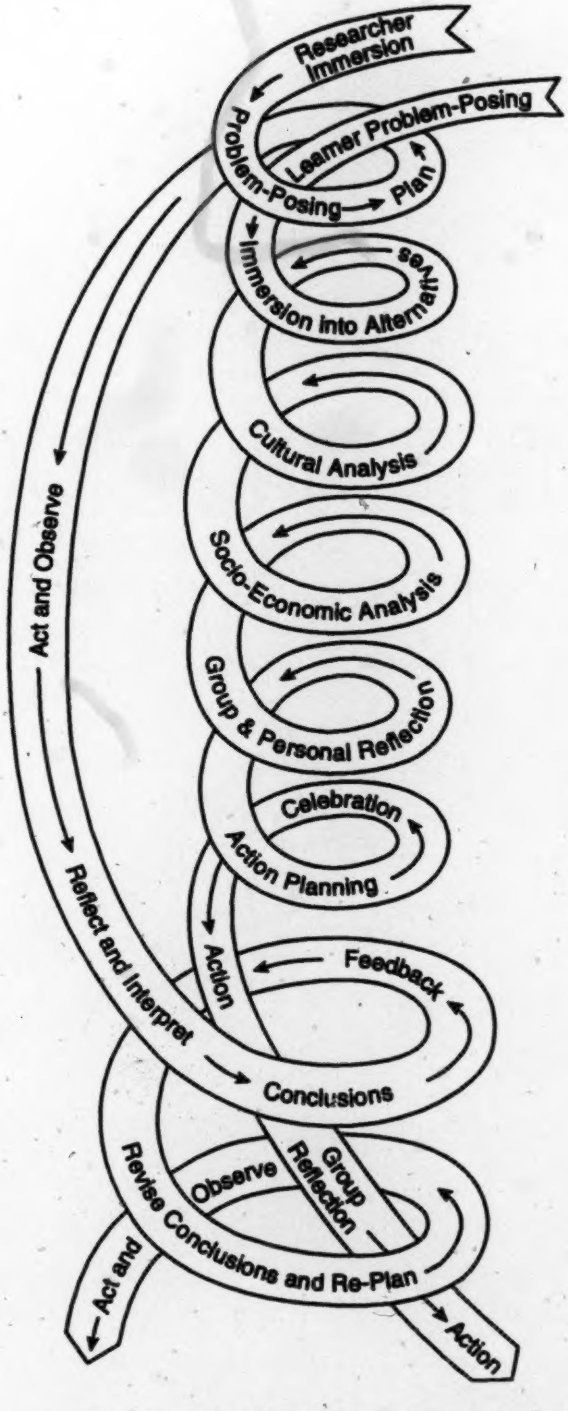
Researcher Immersion
Learner Problem-Posing
Problem-Posing
Plan
Immersion into Alternatives
Cultural Analysis
Socio-Economic Analysis
Group & Personal Reflection
Celebration
Action Planning
Act and Observe
Reflect and Interpret
Action
Feedback
Conclusions
Observe
Group Reflection
Revise Conclusions and Re-Plan
Act and
Action

Figure 3. Double spiral action research process.

From this initial thematic investigation, I distilled several generative issues, all discussed below (Barndt, 1998; Shor, 1992). I considered these generative issues as pedagogical openings, or "the spring beneath the cement," as Touraine (1985) called it. The discontent, frustration, and weariness embedded in their daily concerns illustrate the weak points in the dominant work ideology. Therefore it represented openings around which I could develop the course pedagogy as a critical learning experience.

Thematic Investigation

From her work as an university educator, Elizabeth Ellsworth (1992) challenged the myth perpetuated by critical pedagogues of students who are "silenced" with no "voice" or no "authentic voices rooted in an identity and political position from which they act as agents of change" (100). What she discovered was the complex layers of voice in dialogical teaching. For three years, as I carried out a thematic investigation among numerous classes and almost 100 people, I also discovered that there is little silence, as conceptualized by Freire (1970), but energetic words beneath the polite initial waiting—waiting for a space. When a space is provided, there was an insistent, sometimes despairing stream of questioning beneath the ideological facade. The following section details what my students expressed during the years of 1996-1997 and how this related to the changes in the economic structures of Alberta. The next section describes my search for content to address their concerns and my identification of some generative themes that were eventually folded into the course publicity and pedagogy.

Material Conditions in 1996

Interestingly, the material conditions in 1996 when I first began the thematic investigation would shift within the two years, rendering some surprises among my eventual research participants. In 1996 those attending the university Extension adult education courses had all experienced corporate or public sector cutbacks and organizational restructuring. They were in the diploma-granting adult education program to acquire further education that would enable them to cope with either the increased job responsibilities or a job transition. The emotions ran high as some of them felt "unceremoniously dumped after many long years of loyalty." These individuals were struggling with a loss of dignity and morale, and were in grieving. Those with new jobs or contract work were only too aware of the "tenuousness" of their jobs, and they struggled to adapt to decreased income levels and loss of benefits.

For those still employed and unionized, there had been a resurgence of labour power as collective bargaining sought to deal with the upheaval in the economic market. For those not unionized in the corporate world, they were expected to assist their companies in "going global." Most of them described the pressure on individuals and organizations for "staying competitive," "strategic planning," "team building," "increased efficiency," "keeping the productivity statistics up," and "fast decisions and product turnaround time." Always looming was the threat of plant/office closures or staff layoffs if these criteria were not met. This bred a climate of "vulnerability" given the inability to control the factors around their employment. They were afraid of resisting change because they would be considered "dead weights" and "tossed out the door."

These adults were also only too aware of their dependence on technology, "keeping up with the changes," and their "information overload." Their reactions varied from resistance to high levels of stress and the desire to "pull the plug." Yet, in the end many felt that they had to succumb to the pressure for constant self-improvement through life-long learning driven by the "urgency," almost "panic" to "stay marketable as a commodity."

There was a palpable sense of anger and defiance, yet they considered that there were no clear avenues for expressing this. They considered unions and political parties as generally inferior to the task. They talked about irony of "developing their self" in order to "sell their self" and the violation of their "loyalty and responsibility to their inner selves." In response to the overload of information and material commodities as well as fast-paced lives, there was a strong yearning for spirituality to find some "serenity" in the mad rush.

Material Conditions in 1997

From this baseline of themes, I sought out the ideological messages and images that these adults received about globalization and tested the strength of hegemony. With power and clarity, the 1997 participants identified the contradictory and often insidious faces of globalization. Yet, in this year, anxiety and questions had gained prominence over the anger and defiance.

The first positive face of globalization that they identified as permeating their daily lives was the sense of "omnipotence," in which power and freedom are unlimited. The message is that human ingenuity can do anything—that all "diseases, famine and natural disasters could be wiped out," that we can "control our destinies through the control of genetics, weather and populations," and that "technology would be employed to assist Third World countries so that opportunities would be equalized globally. Through the power of "bigger, better, more," it was anticipated that we would have "better health, longer life expectancies, more comfort through urban lifestyles, higher standards of living, and ongoing individual enrichment." These messages instilled confidence, excitement, and awe at the possibilities and powers being unleashed. In sum, they described the message as one of "immortality" and "invulnerability."

Yet, the ideology of power had an underside that they experienced daily through staff cutbacks and larger workloads. The increased expectations at work forced "constant cutthroat competitiveness and aggressiveness" and "forced learning and self-development." There was less down time at work and less time at home. In their estimation, "change is happening too fast"; and despite the contradiction that change appeared "redundant," the message was that "resistance is futile."

Furthermore, they saw the concentration of power in the hands of the elites and correspondingly felt their lack of control and their "helplessness to change it." They saw the need for "bigger out-of-the box thinking" as well as for "leadership, support, and affirmation of worthiness" in the workplace. They were tired, "tired of the treadmill with no time for people," tired of having to "get employer or employees to buy into new ideas," and they felt torn by the "inconsistent workplace/personal values," particularly the bottom line "that dollars run everything."

At a larger level, they were more than aware of the "depletion of natural resources and environmental degradation," the "wider gap between rich and poor" and the "increased exploitation of underdeveloped nations." They feared national "trade deficits" and "financial vulnerability," and yet felt society becoming "blinded to human issues." At work, they described being "alienated, isolated, pressured, depressed, stressed, and angry at the artificial expectations." At home, they described being overwhelmed and anxious about "changing roles, increased expectations, financial stability, quality of relationships, and the loss of substance that creates community." Their response to feeling insignificant in the face of these larger forces was a turning inward toward becoming "sedentary, passive, and introverted." They summarized that they were "lonely, adrift, disconnected, exhausted, and lacking creativity."

These adults stated that it was clear that their "lives are driven by macro economic" imperatives, and they progressively had to forget the "micro things like quality relationships and neighbours." They said they have "sacrificed their self, their relationships and their personal and family well-being to work," and from this realization emerged a deep "longing for soul and getting back to basic values." More than anything, they wanted "balance."

The second positive face of globalization that they identified was the sense of "omnipresence"—in which there are "no limits, no barriers in terms of distance and time, and instant and unlimited access to everything." The image was one of continuously "expanding horizons where the sky's the limit," and unlimited possibilities through "easier, faster, better, cheaper, and constant communications." They were told to expect "endless growth, markets, opportunities, and consumption," all made possible through enhanced "connectivity and information sharing." They applauded the cultural impact of "belonging and participating" in a "global village that pooled the world resources and energies," "a worldwide community of togetherness and sharing" in which the sense of "isolation is reduced," "cultural cooperation and cultural tolerance is increased," and the world would become "environmentally conscious."

Despite the emotive power of the promise of omnipresence, the "underside" was their "1984" fears of "Big Brother watching" via enhanced monitoring capabilities. They strongly experienced an "invasion of privacy" in a myriad of ways that triggered the need for "self-preservation and resistance." For them, the flip side of omnipresence was the concerns for autonomy and identity, national as well as personal. They saw the "Americanization of the world" and felt "sadness and guilt at the loss of ethnic and Canadian national identity." They considered the "social infrastructure to be compromised" with a rise in "selfishness, self-preoccupation, indifference, boredom, and apathy." Furthermore, they experienced a "loss of personal individuality and sense of self."

Through their increased mobility and transience as workers, they felt that there had been a loss of roots through the "loss of biological family support," even though this had been replaced by "friends in geographic proximity." Despite these familial-type relationships, they still felt "scared, pessimistic, abandoned, and despairing" by all the changes around them. They were "petrified with worry" and particularly had "fears and paranoia around personal safety and crime." Although they considered themselves "becoming more flexible, adaptable, open-minded, culturally and environmentally aware" according to the workplace admonitions, the omnipresence provoked "ambivalence and confusion" regarding what is authentically part of their identity and what is good for society and nation.

The third positive face of globalization was the sense of "omniscience" through the control of information. Information now is "immediate, current, and decentralized." There appears to be more space for "innovation, creativity, and increased opportunities for critical thinking." This has resulted in the impression of a plethora of "lifestyle choices as well as job and travel opportunities anywhere" around the globe. Materially, there is "too much choice," in their estimation.

For them, this face of virile control, granted through access to information, was also accompanied with "feelings of loss"—loss of humanness, autonomy, and competence. First, there was the loss of "face-to-face human contact" and a consequent "loss of people skills." Second, there was a loss of security regarding personal information and fears of electronic crime. They considered technology to offer less ability to intervene in social processes. They also blamed the expansion of technology for the significant "loss of jobs" and enhanced male dominance. The fear about "enslavement by technology" expanded to the subject of genetics and the possible development of a "Borg" civilization with a "loss of mystery in life." Most important, their feelings of incompetence and self-doubt about the ability "to keep up" were significantly increased by persistent pressure in the workplace. They questioned their human abilities next to the capacities of electronic machines by asking "How do we retain all this information? . . . There are no excuses for not knowing the information."

Further, there was an "increased awareness of social/international issues," but their conclusion was that false or biased media information is proliferating. They reported a desensitization to social issues through the availability of media information and, hence, an increase in discrimination and divisiveness.

When asked about the personal impact they experience, they cited decreased human health and well-being, lowered quality of life, enhanced powerlessness and fear, personal and community insecurity, and compromises in professionality and commitment. Their big questions underneath all these observations were "Is *THIS* going to make the world a better place? What's *REALLY* important? Are we controlling technology, or is it controlling us? What's the future for the children and seniors, and how do we prepare them? *WHO* is telling us to do this? and *WHY* are we doing it?" These are questions of ethics, power, and the common good.

In checking the reliability of these themes, these themes have proved to be a powerful and compelling resonance with many classes and groups since. It demonstrates the failing strength of hegemony among those who have felt betrayed and marginalized by the changes in the global economy. Even though many of these people have suppressed their questions or consciously taken on the ideological messages in order to survive financially, these themes continue to be crucial pedagogical entry points for a learning process that could address the not-so-silent pain and fragmentation felt by middle-class folk. I also discovered that, once they identified these questions and themes, they were much more open to engaging in a social analysis, whereas previously they would have been resistant or acted as apologists for the ideological messages in order to preserve cognitive coherence in their daily work circumstances.

Neo-Liberal Policies in Alberta

During the 1990s, Alberta was a microcosm for government and corporate implementation of neoliberal policies. The year 1993 marks the beginning of the "Klein Revolution" that began to restructure the public sector as an extension of corporate restructuring (Harrison & Kachur, 1999; Harrison & Laxer, 1995; Taft, 1997; Taft & Steward, 2000). Alberta was the first Canadian experiment of New Right ideology that followed other exemplars, such as New Zealand, Thatcher's Britain, and Reagan's United States. It was subsequently emulated by Ontario's Harris government beginning in 1995. Under the banners of the "Alberta Advantage" and the "Common Sense Revolution," the

Alberta and Ontario governments were able to redefine the role of government (Harrison & Laxer, 1995).

The key components of the neo-liberal ideology that swept Alberta were:

- reducing the size of government through downgrading public services;
- eliminating the debt and deficit with these savings;
- lowering corporate taxes to attract international business interests;
- deregulating public services such as utilities;
- privatizing aspects of public services, particularly education and health, but also liquor stores and registries, to name others;
- wage cutbacks; and
- reducing union power by undermining contracts.

These policies held appeal for the upper middle class, who were disgruntled about corporate and personal taxes. It also held appeal for others in the middle class who were resentful of their traditional advantages being eroded by "special interests," such as women, minorities, "lazy" public sector workers, and "needy" others such as students, seniors, and welfare recipients, many of whom were considered fraudulent (Harrison & Kachur, 1995).

The pretext created for these changes was the exaggeration of the debt and deficit issue, which was fanned into hysteria. This was supported by moral injunctions for Albertans to tighten their belts through lower wages or job loss, show self-discipline when public services were not as "flush" as they used to be, and increase their voluntary caring services to their communities, services that were once paid jobs. With the above scapegoats and debt pretext, the net result was the overhauling of government services. Massive cuts to education, health care, and social assistance left many without jobs and the access to social services needed more than ever. In 1994, it was announced that education funding would be reduced by 12.4% per pupil or $239 million over four years. Frank Peters (1999) suggests that in reality it was 15.6%, without considering inflation and population growth. Kevin Taft (1997) calculates that by 1999, health care funding fell by as much as 27% from 1992. For instance, in 1995 hospital beds were 40% less than government targeted bed levels through the closure of six provincial hospitals and the reduction of nineteen hospitals to community health centers or long-term care centers.

Therefore, many highly trained professionals in education and health left the province for more receptive climes, contributing to a "brain drain" and subsequent shortages in health care staff eight years later. This cut in government services and jobs came close on the heels of corporate restructuring, with Alberta recording its highest level of unemployment ever at 9.7% in 1993. The ranks of the poor doubled between the years 1993 and 1995 (before government transfers), representing almost 20% of the population. Welfare rolls were cut by 60%, as were the social assistance payments, leading to a heavy increase in food-banks usage, child poverty, and homelessness.[28] Of the six major cities in Canada, Edmonton now had the highest percentage of families living in poverty.

As the adult students in my classes expressed above, the human cost of political and corporate will that drove restructuring was borne heavily by the middle and working class and the expanded ranks of the poor. Once can understand the overwhelming stress, anger, and fear that brought adults back to the classroom to prepare for a new job, try to hang onto their existing jobs, or to initiate self-employment. Reeling from this onslaught of changes, then, adult learners were looking for respite and had an openness to rethinking their assumptions about work and the workplace.

Identifying Pedagogical Content Ideas

During this time, I explored a wide range of literature to identify some content that could provide hope and concrete options in the midst of anxiety and despair. My first step was to undertake a brief analysis of the history of work, the contemporary industrial model of work, and the role of education in the global economy. This analysis informed my first action step of planning the course and can be found in Appendix A. Discussed below is the definition of good work and other concepts considered as useful for a course on transforming working and living.

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[28] Trends and statistics from Statistics Canada and the Edmonton Social Planning Council, February 2000.

Definition of Good Work

The definition of good work utilized in this research was, that activity which creates sustainable wealth for the community, provides a reasonable standard of living, is personally satisfying, is ecologically responsible, is socially useful and responsible, and is available to everyone (Porritt, 1984: 128).

As Mechthild Hart (1992) maintained, a critical redefinition of work needs to center around "production/reproduction for life," not profit. Although the Industrial Era has attempted to free humans from the physical and bodily necessities of their daily existence through technology, she advocated embracing our necessities and ensuring that the link between work, sustaining life, and physical necessity remains intact (Hart, 1992). To do this, she drew a distinction between commodity production and subsistence production and suggested that our society values commodity production as "real" work in that it "frees" us from necessity. By revaluing the vital importance of subsistence work and considering it a new model for work, she shifted toward a notion of a production of life rather than the production of things. In this way, the "use-value" of "things" finds a more appropriate place so that objects are not bought for the sole purpose of 'having" them for prestige, but for their intended use. Good work also uses tools that do not dominate or degrade the social or natural ecologies and recognizes our dependency on the natural world. It enables humans to work in a direct and sensual partnership with natural forces and other conditions of human existence (Hart, 1992; Mies, 1986).

Work can also offer the opportunity to fulfill one's potential and to demonstrate responsibility to a larger society. As Hannah Arendt (1958) defined it, work is not just a job or labour, but also the production of socially useful products and services. Work, loving work, not onerous toil, embodies social and personal virtue and is ethical, spiritual, and aesthetic as well as technical (Bookchin, 1980). Matthew Fox (1994) agreed and contended that the implication is that new kinds of work need to be invented—work that will develop sustainable forms of living such as sustainable energy, sustainable agriculture, sustainable medicine, sustainable business, sustainable minds (that is, education), and sustainable spirits (9).

Hopeful Concepts for Transforming Working and Living

> *For a counter-hegemony is not simply opposition, either at the level of cultural intent or social organizational infrastructure. A counter-hegemony means the reorganization of all these elements around the new cultural vision of a genuinely different way of life (Wexler & Whitson, 1982: 41).*

If education can be a cultural practice for freedom rather than for the reproduction of the status quo (Freire, 1985), then the existing conditions of work pose many ethical questions as well as the search for a new cultural vision of working and living. To be transformative, a learning process ought to move dialectically between an analysis of contemporary work and the presentation of alternatives that nourish yearnings for a better way. To do this, I endeavoured to synthesize the postdevelopment and sustainability literatures that would form the content of the course entitled *Beyond Training: Transforming Your Working and Living*. A brief review of each of these discourses and their overlap can be found in Appendix C.

Sustainability has been defined as ensuring that people's activities and societal needs can be met without diminishing the capacity of the environment to provide for future generations (Brown & Wolf, 1988: 172; Hawken, 1993: 139). It became clear from this review of literature that the principles of sustainability have the potential to stand as an alternative to the forces of manipulation and degradation that are implicit in the "corporate ideology of globalization," as John Ralston Saul (1995) called it. Ecocentric thinking, which puts all Life at the center of a new ethic, offers a powerful cultural critique of anthropocentric thinking.

The key concerns for a society that takes instruction about sustainability from ecological systems consider "what it takes," "what it makes," and "what it wastes" (Hawken, 1993). Ecological sustainability thinking is founded on the realization that all wealth comes from the natural world. We are drawing down nonrenewable resources that took millions of years to create in order to maintain the current belief in growth and consumption. In compromising the life-giving capacities of the Earth that supports us, we threaten the very existence of human life, in addition to that of countless other species and natural systems. Rather than creating irreversible decline by exceeding the carrying capacity of the natural world through the growth-oriented "taking" process, we can ensure that the selected parts of the natural world that we use are returned in equal measure and that what we make and what is wasted can also be returned back to a natural system. In this way, a sustainable society incorporates both a restorative economy and bioregional communities.

Restorative economy: Paul Hawken (1993), a leader in ecologically based business, has suggested that creating an enduring society requires everyday acts and livelihoods that are environmentally restorative and socially just. He advocated sustainable methods of commerce that turn the capitalist model upside down, commerce "where doing good is like falling off a log" (xiv). Hawken asserted that recycling, green changes to products, and reducing pollution are only tinkering on the margins of the problem. In fact, "environmentalism" has actually helped to stimulate new products and advertising that still irretrievably use up resources even though they are green products. The answer, he suggested, is in redesigning commerce.

The terms *ecology* and *economy* derive from the same Latin root *oikos*, meaning household or habitat. While still using market principles, our economy can reduce the consumption of energy and natural resources, provide secure and meaningful employment for people everywhere, restore degraded habitats, and lead to a more fulfilling way of life. The ultimate purpose of business or work should not be simply to make money but to increase the well-being of humankind through a sense of service and acting as good stewards of the wealth we have been given. Hawken (1993) called this a *restorative economy*, in which the success of an economy is determined by either integrating commerce into existing biological systems or mimicking these systems in our production and distribution of goods and services. Such an economy seeks first to maintain rather than use up the natural world and to adapt to natural processes rather than exploit or manipulate them. By achieving a state of dynamic balance rather than one of constant growth and consumption, our economic system can also be abundant and flexible just as biological systems are.

Just as important, Hawken (1993) said, are people of creativity and courage to establish businesses that use a minimum of energy and resources but a maximum of human labour and creativity. In a restorative economy, businesses get smaller but hire more people. Their money is made by the absence of a product or service, and their profits rise when productivity falls. This new form of competition is to conserve and increase our natural resources. To support this new kind of economy, penalties for short-term exploitation would be established, as would government policy incentives for businesses that restore the environment, minimize production, create durable goods, and emphasize longevity over obsolescence.

Bioregional communities: Implicit in much of the environmental writing is the notion of nature as model, in which living and working sustainably means within the limits of a given bioregion. Creating a sustainable society means developing healthy communities that are collectively self-reliant. In order not to exceed a community's ecological footprint, local needs can be met as much as possible from the wealth that is provided in each biological region or bioregion. Bioregionalism is based on the belief that culture, community, and economics are rooted in a geographic place, a place that we need to know intimately and that needs careful watchfulness and protection (Sale, 1996). Trade can be desirable, but global trade among nation-states is a recipe for eroding the capacity of communities to be self-sufficient and self-determining. Global trade forces regions into self-exploitation by siphoning off the natural elements and people that belong to that area. To be authentically self-determining, a local community must have democratic governing bodies with the power to provide its residents with sufficient food, energy, shelter, clothing, health care, education, and arts and crafts first before engaging in trade.

Bioregional thinking, then, requires the abandonment of the notion of controlling and remaking the world in the name of a global monoculture. Rather, locally based change has the potential to create global change. Taking issue with the environmental mantra "Think Globally, Act Locally," Wendell Berry (1991) suggested:

> *If we want to keep our thoughts and acts from the destroying the globe, then we must see to it that we do not ask too much of the global or of any part of it. To make sure that we do not ask too much, we must learn to live at home, as independently and self-sufficiently as we can... The right local questions and answers will be the right global ones. (20)*

Bioregional living, then, is learning to "live in place." The implications of bioregional thinking extend to rethinking political boundaries, but more broadly concern the appropriate scale for human systems. Schumacher (1973), Weber (1946), Illich (1973), Berry (1992), and other theorists have cited the problems with large, highly centralized systems in which homogenization and control are required for efficient operation. They proposed that human systems need to be smaller so that they are manageable in terms of complexity, face-to-face interaction, and accountable ethical action. David Orr (1992:36-37) argued that there are thresholds beyond which stewardship gives way to power, quality gives way to quantity, and ethical behaviour gives way to anonymity. This principle can be applied to cities, corporations, political systems, and the economy.

In sum, ecological sustainability involves the construction of a new worldview and the transformation of daily cultural patterns of living according to a conservation ethic, fostering of ecological literacy, redesign of commerce, regeneration of traditional land knowledge, redesign of various human systems that view nature as model, and bioregional living with its implications for scale and centralization.

Although the postdevelopment and sustainability discourses have travelled down different roads, the seeds of a vision for "what could be" are very similar. For a sustainable and just future, many writers in these discourses envisioned a transformation toward "smaller"—smaller political units in which face-to-face participatory democracy is possible, smaller-scale technology that is patterned after ecological systems, smaller work units in which humans can be part of the decision making, and smaller communities that are self-sufficient to a large degree and cooperative in nature. They both envisioned a transformation toward the "simpler"—simpler family relationships in which reproduction and the affirmation of life are central, simpler gender relationships in which partnership is central, simpler material needs in which simple pleasures and spiritual needs are central, and simpler social tasks in which healing and caring for young and old are fulfilled through the bonds of trust and reciprocity. They both envisioned "diversity"—diversity of individuals, diversity of cultures, and diversity of ecological systems. This does not undo the gains of the modern era, but it takes them to a new level of sophistication.

The impact of smaller, simpler, and more diverse can undercut the dependence that many communities now have on exploitative global economic structures (Mander, 1996). It undermines the homogenizing, atrophied national political structures that create passive citizenry. It undermines the "capital flight" of money and people by rerooting them in sustainable communities whose viability has been restored. It undermines the rapacious impacts of the industrial capitalism and provides the space for natural systems to restore themselves.

Such are the broad outlines of a sustainable future. The issues, particularly issues of power, which arise when these postdevelopment and sustainability discourses are integrated, is discussed in much more length in Appendix B. Yet, this broad outline poses new questions and frameworks of understanding that could engage the participants and be examined for their resonance.

Planning the First Action Step

Generative Issues as Pedagogical Entry Points

As Freire (1970) has said, each historical epoch has a "complex of interacting themes" that constitutes its "thematic universe" (92). From the thematic investigation that I carried out with adult students and from the above investigation of possible course content, the task was to derive generative issues and formulate them into the course publicity and content (Barndt, 1998; Freire, 1970).

A generative issue differs from themes in that it elaborates a core issue around which the themes revolve. It also contains the implicit contradictions experienced on an everyday personal level. Generative issues are provocative as they are a shorthand way of portraying unresolved social issues and generating an understanding of the connections between personal life and larger social issues (Shor, 1992). In this way, generative issues can "generate" the posing of deeper-level questions about social reality. As the antagonisms around these contradictions deepen, the social rationalizations become clearer. In times of crisis, as was experienced in Alberta in the 1990s through mass job loss, the irrationality of the rationalizations surface, and their incorporation into individual subjectivities is clearer.

The task, then, was to identify these rationalizations or myths and challenge the limit-situations they posed for individuals and society. Freire (1970) defined *limit-situations* as the perceived limits or constraints within which an individual determines that he/she must make decisions (92). By identifying a generative issue, the perceived limits can be challenged, and the field from which decisions and actions occur can be enlarged. In contemporary parlance, this is considered "out-of-the-box" thinking.

Generative Issue One: Job Dependence

In reviewing the themes generated by the participants and refracting this through the historical and contemporary analyses of work, there were three primary generative issues. The first generative issue was that of employment dependence. The participants clearly identified the tenuousness of the job market and the need to adequately fit themselves into the existing employment structures to provide for themselves. The only control they could exert was to develop their skills and get appropriate certification to keep themselves marketable. Beyond this immediate instrumentalist control over themselves as economic units, they felt helpless and vulnerable. This situation limited personal control over self-preservation and was contradictory to the promise of omnipotence with unlimited power and freedom. The contrast accentuated their feelings of insignificance in the face of powerful global forces. It highlighted their anxious impotence to change the troubling directions toward which the world seemed to be moving, but upon which they were held captive.

Generative Issue Two: Purpose of Working and Living

The second generative issue was the purpose of work and life—the identity and meaning issue. Job dependence invaded other priorities that the participants considered part of a meaningful life—quality relationships, rest, and a sense of larger purpose that goes beyond the confines of their personal lives. Against the promise of omnipresence, there was a shortage of time outside of work to pursue activities of greater meaning. In fact, as they are "supposed" to derive their purpose from work, the increasing invasion of work ought to add a sense of meaning. Yet, they sensed that the meaning of their existence was being eroded through compromised relationships, lack of time for health-full activities, and the intrusion of technology, leading to a depersonalized, faster-paced world. The higher profile of work and technology provoked questions of autonomy and fears about incompetence as well as personal well-being, quality of family life, and the erosion of community identity and security. Their questions revolved around whether there is a purpose for working and living beyond bottom-lines and other economic definitions—something else that this was all for.

Generative Issue Three: Power over Change or Change over Power

The last generative issue was the power to create change. Within the situation of job dependence and an eroding sense of purpose given the expansion of bottomline thinking lay the issue of change. "Change is good," and therefore the participants embraced their responsibilities to keep up, be creative, and flow flexibly with workplace changes. Yet the sense of urgency and panic created a deep level of anxiety about their capacities and a deep level of doubt about the ability to play a meaningful part in the larger forces of change. Rather, the desire was to hide from the external pressures and seek inner serenity.

The key contradiction was between the media-generated feelings of power and the helplessness to change the flow of history or the demands placed upon them as individuals. In broader terms, the participants saw their situation as limited, and their affective responses were anxiety, fear, passivity, depression, despair, isolation, and exhaustion. Their sense of helplessness framed what they understood as a limit situation—in this case that all the changes are inevitable and that little could be done beyond preparing oneself for it. This, of course, is actively promulgated by the media and business futurists as the hegemonic ideology. Members of society are told that they have power, but it is vicarious power that others wield either through technology, money, or access to policy making. In other words, the message is "Don't worry; we have it all under control, there is no need for resistance or questioning. Just do your part well, and it will all work out." This has resulted in a passive culture in which individuals internalize roles scripted for them and passively tolerate domination, for they cannot see beyond it.

Crafting the Course Description

Given the freedom to create a course around these generative issues, I chose to highlight several key concepts, as illustrated below, in the course publicity. These key concepts also became the initial pedagogical entry points for the course.

BEYOND TRAINING: TRANSFORMING YOUR WORKING AND LIVING

Course Description (Course 5710)
Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta
Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education Program

"To live well is to work well."
Thomas Aquinas

Traditional approaches to job training and career development focus on providing people with skills and knowledge to "fit into" specific job functions. This course will go beyond these approaches to look at work that fits you by offering a highly unique opportunity—to create new kinds of work or to transform your work so that it is meaningful personally, contributes to community needs, balances individual/family well-being, and respects the natural world.

Participants in this course will:

- rethink the purpose of work—how, why, and for whom we work
- develop personal principles to guide how you wish to work, what is meaningful work, and the preferred relationship with other facets of living
- understand how the global economy is changing the structure of work as well as the ethical implications of this
- contrast work as a job, career, vocation, profession, and spiritual endeavor
- explore current social, economic, and ecological issues in the Edmonton region to determine "What kinds of work are required in our community today?"
- develop a work plan either for new work or transforming existing work
- make contact with the necessary resources, skills, knowledge, and seed funds required to implement your work plan
- establish ongoing supportive relationships.

Through a highly interactive learning process, this course will be:

reflective - so participants have the space and time needed to sort out principles and ideas for their work,

critically thoughtful - of the ways in which we are currently expected to work,

experiential and forward-thinking - as participants visit an exciting array of local work alternatives

action-oriented - as participants design and implement their work plans, and

skills-oriented - as participants identify the skills, resources and knowledge needed to make the transition to their preferred work.[29]

The publicity first problematized the dominant program approach of training. From the thematic investigation, it was clear that participants were skeptical of the purpose of training that commodified them even though this might benefit their job opportunities in the short term. Even more broadly, the publicity problematized the purpose of work, both the purposes beyond themselves that confer meaning on their work and the current arrangements of work to dictate the shape of their living. This construction of the problem was meant to tap the generative issue of purpose, particularly the lack of balance between work and home that erodes purpose.

Second, by describing the reflection and action in which they would be engaged, the course was conferring power into their hands rather than by training them to capitalize on positioning themselves within the systems they work in—the conventional human resource approach. The power lay in developing their own principles and plans but, more important, to create work that is needed by the community, not work that fits them into bureaucratically dictated positions. Moreover, the implication is that living ought to dictate the shape of work, not work dictate the quality of living. This construction of the problem was meant to tap the issues of job dependence and power over change.

Third, the publicity attempted to tap the silent "big picture" questions that lay under the surface but rarely are given voice: "Who is telling us to do this, and why are we doing it?" For it is through work that many of the power, identity, and control issues are manifested and which dictate quality of living. The publicity was written to attract participants who would either be in transition between jobs or deeply dissatisfied with their existing work and waiting for a change opportunity. From previous class experiences, these would be the individuals most open to these questions; questions that would be threatening under other, more comfortable circumstances. The impact of a loss of job or living in an alienating job is the issue of power over change.

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[29] Please see Appendix Three for other publicity materials as well as subsequently revised versions.

Fourth and last, the course publicity linked work with quality of life, health, family, community, ethics, and social/ecological issues. By utilizing a sustainability framework, a holistic approach could demonstrate that sustainable work relates to sustainable living, sustainable communities, and sustainable local ecologies. This framework would facilitate the connection of sustainability with the generative issues as a hopeful way of seeing beyond the limit-situations.

Crafting the Course

Sustainability as a Life Web

Finding both readable literature and community resources that could become part of the course pedagogy and link sustainability with the generative issues was a frustrating journey. I could not find a treatise on the principles of sustainability that was directly derived from biological dynamics. Most formulations of sustainability were very narrow and did not offer concrete guidance for transforming living and working. In the search for exemplars, few people in our local city embodied sustainability principles in ways in which their living and working cohered. Therefore, a new conceptualization of sustainability needed to be developed for the course that directly addressed the participant's generative issues.

Furthermore, as I interviewed the participants prior to the beginning of the course, I found that the key issues and the material conditions differed from those of 1996. In 1996 the participants were angry and defiant as most of them faced job loss. In 1997 the participants were anxious and questioning, with some facing job loss or substantial changes within their workload. In 1998, to my surprise, none of the participants registered in the course were facing job loss through unemployment. Either the job transition had already been made or, more commonly, there was deep frustration with their existing job as many of them were the ones who had survived the cutbacks. Despite my framing of the course specifically around "new work," the key issues for these participants were balance between existing work and home, spirituality, ethics, and a profound job dissatisfaction. Either they wanted to find a way to exist in their current work, or they were on a longer-term, systematic search for more fulfilling work.

Therefore, I conceptualized sustainability in a way that could address the whole complement of themes that I identified across the years.

Given that relationships are central in sustainability thinking, the new framework of sustainability had to first illustrate the immediate reality that is troubling. Second, the framework had to include possibilities for redesigning work and lifestyles that are life-giving personally. However, to combat the individualist thinking that we are islands simply responsible for ourselves, the framework integrated their gut concerns for global communities and for natural systems. This whole systems approach is illustrated in Figure 4, in which the framework is a web that begins with the notion of personal sustainability but then attempts to expand immediate daily relationships to encompass relationships to community/global sustainability, and finally, ecological sustainability. All of these aspects of sustainability were considered to be connections to the spiritual.

Personal Sustainability

Personal sustainability begins with the assumption that most people consider the following attributes to provide a high quality of life: time for quality relationships, a comfortable income, feelings of competence and contribution, and healthy bodies. These attributes concern five vital dimensions of the personal sphere of sustainability: our work, our money (particularly earnings, spending, debt, and savings), our consumption, our life energy (consequently our time), and our life purpose or 'place in the universe.'

Holding a mirror to the pattern of how these dimensions are connected and the pace at which they are lived reveals what is expressed about our values. Each participant was to scrutinize each dimension and the impact if this "relationship" was consistent with the sense of life purpose and a high quality of life. By making the patterns between the dimensions conscious and highlighting the cultural norms in each area, possibilities for change could then become evident. Similarly, by determining levels of fulfillment from each dimension and considering the principles of sustainability, changes that would bring greater integrity and richness to each person's life could be identified.

Together these five dimensions constitute our "lifeways" which determine our quality of life. The term *lifestyle* was rejected as an invention of market-driven capitalism in which one assesses success by the ability to consume "style." This consumption of style has become a primary form of self-expression and, consequently, a source of

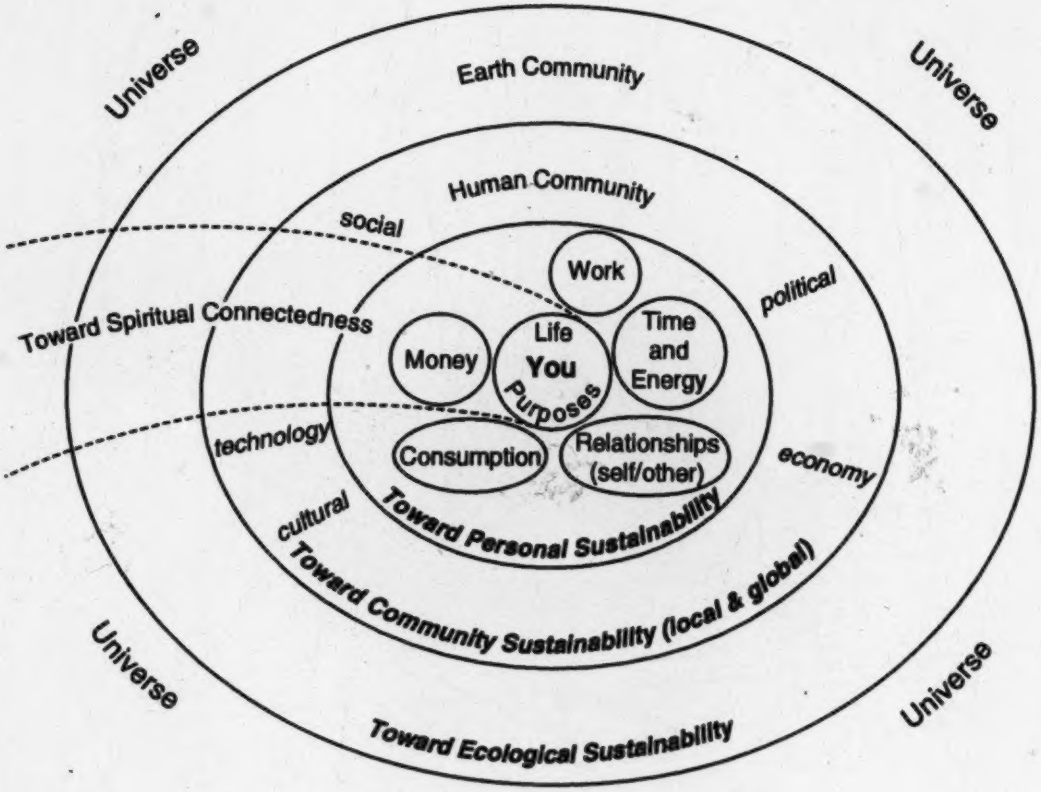
Universe
Earth Community
Universe
Human Community
social
Work
political
Toward Spiritual Connectedness
Life
You
Purposes
Money
Time
and
Energy
technology
Consumption
Relationships
(self/other)
economy
cultural
Toward Personal Sustainability
Toward Community Sustainability (local & global)
Universe
Universe
Toward Ecological Sustainability

Figure 4. Sustainability Framework

identity that lubricates the market economy. In contrast, the term *lifeways* refers to the composite of habitual and conscious practices in the five critical dimensions and the rhythms by which they are lived. As Stephanie Mills (1990) suggested, bioregionalism[30] is about growing a lifeway tuned to the physical place in which one is located" (vii). The term lifeways is a linguistic bridge between currently unsustainable lifestyles and sustainable lifeways.

As a way of addressing the participants' generative issues, I would introduce what Roszak (1978) called seeking liberation from waste and busywork, from excessive appetite and anxious competition, and getting on with the essential business of life, including simple pleasures and spiritual wholeness (286).

Ecological Sustainability

By linking the previous analyses of money and time with consumption, the larger connections to the global human community and the ecological communities could be made. The linking concept was natural abundance—in this case, of the natural world. Basic ecological activities such as photosynthesis and entropy are the primary activities that keep us alive and are able to generate the primary products that our well-being requires. Our relationship with the Earth, not a static rock-like thing, but a breathing, constantly changing dance of life, also provides us with spiritual connections, as does the human sphere through our embodied spirits. The impact of consumption was best examined through the notion of ecological footprinting and lifecycle analysis to determine how much impact the participants have on the productive capacities of the Earth. The other key notion was voluntary simplicity as a way to decrease impact on the Earth and enhance one's ability to live with conscious intent or mindfulness. Shifting from the cultural norm of material wealth and social adequacy to a new norm of material adequacy and social wealth[31] could enable the shift to a different priority system that positively impacts environmental regeneration. It also provides a sense of fulfillment according to one's sense of life purpose.

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[30] Bioregionalism is a growing movement that advocates economies of self-sufficiency wtihin naturally occurring "bioregional" boundaries. In this way, culture, community and economics are rooted in a geographic place (Sale, 1996). Such a geographic place can be defined by watershed or by geographic ecozones of specific biophysical factors including, species, soils, landforms, and natural communities. These ecozones exist within the eleven Earth biomes, such temperate grassland, tundra, mountains, northern boreal forest, tropical rainforest and so forth.

[31] This shift in modifiers was devised by Myles Kitagawa, who was a guest instructor in the course.

Community and Global Sustainability

Not only does the sustainability framework link individual consumption to ecological sustainability, but it also links global consumption to the global structure of production. By examining the changes that the participants experienced in their workplaces to the restructuring of work globally, they could begin to understand the impact of such restructuring on themselves as well as on other social sectors around the globe. This analysis also examined the impact that the changes in technology, culture, money, and work have on their daily lives and the sustainability of global communities.

The participants generally wanted to know that their work contributed to making the world a better place in some way, that their work had a larger impact. After the above analysis, the participants then embarked on rethinking the purpose of work and what contribution they wanted to make with their work—either supporting these existing structures or supporting sustainable structures. To assist this rethinking, a historical review of work was offered with more inclusive notions of work. From this, the participants then defined the meaning of work for themselves and how their work could mimic sustainability principles. Finally, they were to consider what work needed to be done to assist their immediate locale in becoming a sustainable community.

In sum, the connections provided in this framework enabled participants to evaluate their lives according to sustainability principles and provide possibilities for transforming their working and living towards balance and meaning. The key questions that were asked through the course were:

1. Do your daily activities (your living and working) sustain you, your community, other global communities, and the ecosphere?
2. Which activities do and do not contribute to sustainability?
3. How can you make your working and living meaningful and useful?

Conceptualizing Spirituality and Learning

The explicit integration of spirituality into the course was based on the premise that transformation necessarily involves reflection on life purpose and creative spaces for envisioning new patterns. It is difficult to understand life purpose or to reinvent work if there is no cultivation of silence and a listening to the inner spirit for guidance. The life blood of the course was considered to be the activation of a creative journey. As Julia Cameron (1992) suggested, "The heart of creativity is an experience of the mystical union; the heart of the mystical union is an experience of creativity. . . . It does not matter which way you think of it: creativity leading to spirituality or spirituality leading to creativity" (2). Mary Daly (as cited in Cameron, 1992) said, "It is the creative potential itself in human beings that is the image of God" (2). Although the sustainability framework gave an overall organization to the pedagogical process, it was expected that the transformation process would include an element of mystery beyond any control or comprehension (Evans, 1987). Once creative dreams and yearnings are unleashed, each person would be on his/her own journey to the creative source. As Carl Jung has observed, one could expect synchronicity in which archetypes would be activated, giving meaning to various events and offering ways out of psychological impasses beyond the scope of the course (Mattoon, 1981). Therefore, the pedagogical process did not incorporate any personal counselling or group encounters for dealing with psychological impasses, but gave spiritual tools from various faith traditions for individuals to address personal issues as they arose. In sum, this conceptualization recognizes that there are no boundaries to the sacred, despite cultural compartmentalization into sacred and profane (Kornfield, 1993).

It is important to specify that spirituality is conceptualized not only as an inward journey, but also as intimately connected to an outward journey. Creation theologian Matthew Fox (1994) considered this as "inner work" and "outer work." The 'inner work' includes rational, emotional, and ethical reflections and the process of tapping creativity. Yet, this is only one aspect of the process of reinventing work. "Work comes from the inside out, work is the expression of our soul, our inner being. Work is that which puts us in touch with others, not so much at the level of personal interaction, but at the level of service in the community" (5). Drawing from Thomas Aquinas, Fox maintained that "to live well is to work well" and that the task is to rejoin life and livelihood. Only as one's inner work is addressed, such as how, why, and for whom we work, as well as what we believe the purpose of our work ought to be, can the outer work begin to take some shape. Then one can ask Fox's questions:

1. What joy do you derive from your work and what joy do others derive from your work?

2. How does your work relieve suffering?

3. How does your working and living include appreciation, gratitude, and reverence?

Through outer work we are connected to the community in a certain way. Time must be taken to consider the purpose for and impact of our work on the community. It needs to be judged according to different priorities than production for the household, company, and nation. From this consideration of priorities, new forms of work that are joyful and contribute to the community can be derived that are simultaneously sustainable for self and world.

Of the joy and reverence he found in his work, Einstein (as cited in Elgin, 1993) has said:

> *The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the power of all true science. He [sic] to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. (115)*

Spiritual practices enable people to live more consciously and more unencumbered so that they are open to joy and awe. When we have trivialized our human experience through the shallow pursuits of money, consumer goods, and status as the way toward security and meaning, we can be numbed to the experience of awe toward both the natural world and our daily human relationships. Spiritual practices enable one to clarify and simplify toward satisfying relationships, live in harmony with nature, and be of service to the world. It is the basis from which ecological literacy and justice literacy flows. As Elgin (1993) summarized:

> *On the one hand, a life of creative simplicity frees energy for the soulful work of spiritual discovery and loving service—tasks that all of the world's wisdom traditions say we should give our highest priority. On the other hand, a simpler way of life also responds to the urgent needs for moderating our use of the world's nonrenewable resources and minimizing the damaging impact of environmental*

> *pollution. Working in concert, these pushes and pulls are creating an immensely powerful dynamic for transforming our ways of living, working, relating and thinking. (45)*

Various exercises were devised to foster spiritual disciplines that unleashed creativity, conscious living/working, and awe. These exercises consistently focused on three facets of spirituality: attentiveness or mindfulness, gratitude, and connectedness.

Attentiveness is becoming more conscious of daily activities, or as Kornfield (1993) put it, the art of awakening (56). If the fullness of attention is cultivated, one's spiritual life naturally grows and becomes connected to the innermost self. Therefore, over the three months, the participants were asked to do any number of out-of-class tasks: to become mindful of symbols or metaphors of balance or simplicity; to become aware of their five senses at home, at the workplace, and outside; and to become mindful in observing their self, their activities, their feelings, their thinking, their bodies, and their spirit. Asked to be open to the natural abundance in their lives, they were to be mindful of simple acts such as breathing, walking, eating an apple, or drinking water, and then to give thanks for these gifts. They would identify fulfilling things that did not cost money or unnecessarily use natural resources. They were to become alert to work which needed to be done in the community and how sustainability principles could be applied to their daily activities. They were to be open to any gifts of synchronicity. They would develop affirmation statements that served to strengthen their resolve and commitment as they became subjected to the negative self-talk or doubts of others.

To become ecologically connected and enable "nature to be your teacher" (Wordsworth; as cited in Cornell, 1987: 13), the participants were asked to regularly walk in wild places noting the colors, shapes, rhythms, and life forms that encompassed them and the effect upon them. At the midpoint of the course, they joined each other in a weekend retreat that was a deliberate withdrawal from routines and responsibilities. This relaxed and reflective time was used to seek further personal clarification of life purpose and to make some decisions regarding an action on which they wanted to concentrate throughout the remaining part of the course. To catalyze their groundedness within themselves and to the natural world, they were led in several exercises by a guest to learn to see patterns in the natural world, expand the attunement of their senses, and learn from the biological processes in the natural world. There was an important flow established between the outside, natural world and the inside, human-created world that pointed to possibilities for new lifeways. For urbanized individuals, this was a significant departure from regular routines.

Throughout the course, in-class activities included relaxation exercises, visualization exercises, and guided imagery for deriving symbols of meaning. The in-class activities concentrated heavily on creative expressions that often were nondiscursive and nonprose. At various times the participants drew, made collages, created sculptures, wrote or collected poetry, and utilized forms of drama. Each of these creative forms had the potential to tap other forms of knowing and connect individuals to transpersonal values that opened them beyond the boundaries of the self.

The participants were asked to keep attentiveness journals to facilitate becoming attentive to their experiences as they journeyed through the course. This was later used to write reflective stories of their journey through the course. They were encouraged to use them as a repository of drawing, poems, quotes, articles, or any gathered artifacts. They also had the option of engaging in writing morning pages which included stream-of-consciousness writing as an emptying of pressing thoughts and issues. Once done, individuals could more easily tap into their creative energy and reconnect to their heart through the morning pages rather than the head in the attentiveness journal.

Each of these spiritually related activities were also meant to address the "six strings of holistic learning/teaching" as identified by Virginia Griffen (1988: 107-131). These six strings relate to the six capacities utilized in any learning situation: the intellectual, emotional, relational, physical, metaphoric or intuitive, and spiritual. The task was to deliberately utilize these capacities, thereby expanding the learning potential. For instance, each time the class gathered, there was a sacred centre or focal point that symbolically portrayed the theme of that class. It often involved music; the elements, such as water, fire, Earth, and air; as well as various human-created and natural artifacts and images. This enhanced the relaxed atmosphere of the class by tapping more of the five senses and was specifically meant to challenge the metaphoric capability that is necessary to creative endeavour. Such images also have the capacity to trigger archetypes and 'inner wisdom" that could guide the inner work of the participants.

Various classes also involved celebration, usually including food. Twice the class engaged in taking leave rituals, including responsive participation, readings, or litanies. Together, all of these activities were utilized to enrich the learning process and expand the learner's awareness and exploration as part of a transformative process that goes beyond rational or relational elements to unblock creativity and extend understanding.

SUMMARY OF STUDY DESIGN

In considering the various action research designs, this study combined a number of models to develop a double spiral model. The first step of immersion and problem posing involved thematic investigation with adult education students over the years of 1996-1998. These themes led to the identification of generative themes: job dependence, purpose of work, and power over change. The first step also included reviewing postdevelopment and sustainability literature to identify ideas for course content. Two concepts, restorative economy and bioregional communities, were hopeful concepts that were incorporated into the course for transforming working and living. From the generative issues and this literature, the course publicity was written and a conceptual framework developed for the course around a holistic notion of sustainability that linked personal habits with ecological issues and global social issues. It also explicitly incorporated spirituality into the learning processes. Chapter Five discusses the unfolding process of action research and the next two steps of enacting and observing the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

LIVING RESEARCH:

ENACTING AND OBSERVING THE STUDY

> *The question of "How does one conduct educational action research?" is thus replaced with the question "How does one conduct a life that includes the practice of educational action research?"... Who one is becomes completely caught up in what one knows and does.... The way one lives one's life matters (Carson & Sumara, 1997: xvii-xix)*

Chapter Four discussed the preliminary investigations that shaped the initial design of the study. Chapter Five shall illustrate that this design constantly flowed and evolved as the participants became involved and as the process unfolded. The deeper story is the story of how I was challenged at every turn, not only on the pedagogical design or on my data analysis, but also on how I live my life. This study eventually became living practice that transformed my way of thinking and living.

COURSE LOCATION AND PARTICIPANT RESPONSE

The research was carried out through the construction of a new university extension course self-selected by the general public according to the description provided earlier. The course was located within the same adult education program in which I taught and would therefore attempt to reach participants similar to those with whom I had carried out the two-year thematic investigation.

This location was advantageous as I was given the freedom to develop an entirely new course, provided that the course fit generally within their broad mandate and general structure. Therefore, the course was three months in length with weekly three-hour classes. It was a credit-carrying course so that participants could use their completion credits toward certification, but it was an unmarked credit/no-credit course.

The location was also restrictive as I was "encouraged" to take more registrants than I desired, making the logistics of interviewing and in-class observation and reflection difficult. Similarly, registration was on a first come-first served basis so that I could not ensure that the registrants reflected diversity in terms of age, ethnicity, gender, and motivation. I restricted the enrollment to 15, and the registrants represented a range of ages, personal/family incomes, types of work, and ethnic backgrounds. In terms of gender diversity, the participants were predominately women. There were four additional registrants beyond the capped number, two of whom were male, but the administration would not allow me the flexibility of choosing participants within my capped number. The final group consisted of only one male. One woman decided to drop out as she was in the initial stages of a separation/divorce and was too emotionally traumatized. The final research group, then, was 13 females and one male.

THE PARTICIPANTS

Of these 14 people, the 13 women were between the ages of 33 and 64, resulting in an average age of 44 years. To augment the voice of the one male registrant, aged 37, I also interviewed a male spouse of a participant, aged 41, who was actively engaged with the course material with his wife.

Ancestral ethnicity was often mixed but primarily Northern and Eastern European, including Irish, English, Scottish, Scandinavian, German, Russian, Romanian, and Ukrainian. Only one person was a member of a visible minority, of Chinese descent, and was born in South-East Asia. Six of the participants were born in Edmonton, Canada, the site of the research, and one participant was born in rural Alberta. The remaining five participants were born in Canada, representing most of the Eastern provinces, and one participant was born in the United States. In total, three participants were rural-born.

Ten of the participants were either married or in long-term relationships, two were remarried, and two were in a lesbian relationships. Three participants were divorced and one was single. Nine participants had children of varying ages and five did not.

In assessing the class status of the participants, parameters for assessing class was vital. Yet, defining class is problematic in advanced industrial societies. Max Weber has defined *social class* as the multidimensional intersection between economic income, power, and prestige, where high prestige may not result in high income and vice versa. Loosely, in terms of class stratification, industrial society is comprised of the upper class, the managerial/corporate class with class fluidity, and the middle class comprised of credentialled professionals, civil service, small businesspeople, and artisans. There is fluidity between the middle and working class for those in office support/professional support occupations and some well-paid sales and trades people. The working class is usually considered to be those in manual labour jobs, retail service and sales, and office support. There is fluidity between the working class and the working poor as the structure of employment changes and more and more people become structurally unemployed.[32] Whether underemployed or unemployed, the poor lack access to the basic needs required to live in a specific society.

Generally, then, the middle class is "the middle" in terms of prestige—between the working class, which is considered to have low authority, autonomy, and prestige in their work, and the upper class, which owns the means of production, has substantial access to wealth, and wields the most societal power. However, with the rise of the managerial/corporate class who wield substantial control over assets and command very high incomes, the line between the middle class and the upper class is blurred. Similarly, the middle class is shrinking as income and job stability decrease. Studies have indicated that the numbers in the middle class are slowly declining; in the United States, from 61% in 1964 to 45% in 1993 (Johnson, 1995).

When considering the overall family income, type of occupation, and cultural and economic capital, all of the participants were defined as middle class. However, three participants were in the fluid zone between middle and working class, with one participant seeing herself as working class in terms of income, job status, and educational achievement. Her self-perception was not borne out in the above definitions, however.

As previously indicated, all of the research participants were currently employed, although the hours of work varied. Their individual incomes varied: One participant had an income in the $10,000-$20,000 bracket, one participant was in the $20,000-$30,000 bracket, and both of these participants had a family income of $30,000-$45,000. One participant had a part-time income of $20,000-$30,000, with a total family income of $60,000-$75,000. Five participants had an income in the $30,000-$45,000 bracket. Two of these had been in higher brackets but deliberately chose to work less for health and lifestyle reasons. Two had family incomes totalling $45,000-$60,000, and one totalling $75,000-$90,000. Of these three family incomes, one was retirement income. Four participants had personal incomes of $45,000-$60,000; their family incomes were primarily in the $90,000-$115,000 bracket, with one at $75,000-$90,000.

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[32] The structurally employed are those workers displaced due to restructuring that eliminates the number of full-time jobs. For these workers, their unemployment becomes permanent rather than transitional given lack of work in their community or occupation.

In terms of financial resources, four participants had no savings on which to live. Two participants could live for up to six months on their savings at their current rate of spending; one from 1-2 years, three from 2-5 years, one from 5-8 years, one from 8-10 years, and two over 10 years.

Educational background included seven university-degreed professionals (only four were working in an area related to their degree), five participants with technical credentials working in professional or organizational support positions, and two with significant on-the-job training that related to their current positions. Most of the participants were enrolled in the adult education certificate program through the University extension program for work-related reasons. The participants' occupations included commercial cook; bank financial planner/business owner; accountant/computer instructor; three civil service employees, including the areas of management support, public relations, and public health inspection; two nurses, one in management and one health technician; retired legal assistant; computer instructional designer; education consultant/contractor; special education teacher assistant; and home economist in the public utilities.

THE FIRST INTERVIEW: PARTICIPANT IMMERSION AND PROBLEM POSING

The above information was gathered through both an initial interview (schedules found in Appendix D) and a survey that each participant completed prior to the first session of the course (also in Appendix D). I refer to these conversations as "interviews" because the participants preferred the term *interview* as they understood it as a place in which they could expound on their issues. If I participated too much in the conversation beyond asking questions or making synthesizing comments, they grew agitated. However, I considered it necessary to establish a trust relation and to discuss my experiences enough so that there was a degree of mutuality. In some cases I knew the participants as previous students, but in all cases the interview space was a time for both of us to orient ourselves to their questions and struggles.

"Recognizing that all questioning arises out of the negativity of experience, that is, that things are not as we had assumed them to be" (Carson, 1986: 75), my role was to listen to the negativity of experience and to raise further questions that focussed their reflections. I did not regard the participants as "informants" or "objects of study," but as mutual searchers involved in a discourse about ways of working and living that could be more life-giving. Each person's reflections invariably led to unique conversational topics that were not discussed with other participants. Yet, the core of each conversation was to "lay open" the opinions and the possibilities to uncover "true" questions that lay behind their searching (Gadamer, 1975). Over time, as the participants began to know me as an instructor as well as a researcher, our conversations evolved into deep explorations about what gives meaning to each person, what degrades meaningfulness, and how their sense of meaning relates to forms of working and living.

What was most intriguing out of the three conversations I had with each person was that they felt challenged to ask themselves new questions that were just as powerful as those included in the course pedagogy itself. They each enjoyed the discussions immensely, as did I, and they spent much time in their journals pondering new questions and insights gathered from our conversations. Unanticipated, then, was the role that these conversations played in immersing the participants in reflection about their lives and initiating the problem-posing process prior to the course.

ITERATIVE PEDAGOGICAL MOMENTS

As these initial conversations unfolded, I realized that my original pedagogical plan was not appropriate partly because many of them were not facing unemployment and because, in many cases, they had an articulate analysis of their workplace already. I had intended to utilize the following phases as a merging of the traditional action research and participatory action research models:

> *Moment One Is Immersion in Reality and Problem Posing, where participants share their own stories and generate their own themes around work, unemployment, and living.*
>
> *Moment Two Is Socioeconomic Analysis of the global economy and the restructuring of work to develop their own economic theories and to overcome their culture of silence.*
>
> *Moment Three Is Immersion in Alternatives, where participants become familiar with a wide array of local initiatives that contribute to building sustainable communities and restoring natural ecologies. From this experience, they begin to derive the principles of sustainability.*
>
> *Moment Four Is Inner Reflection on work and vocation, where participants explore the history of work, their sense of vocation, and principles upon which to base "good work."*

> *Moment Five Is Community Research, where they research what work is required by the local community in light of their own work interests and the principles of sustainability.*
>
> *Moment Six Is Action Planning, where guest speakers assist the participants in devising an action plan for a new kind of work (expected to be self-employment) or the transformation of existing work.*
>
> *Moment Seven Is Reflection on Action, where several months after the formal course is over they gather to discuss the successes and constraints of their plans.*

Through deep listening to the participants in the initial interview, a pedagogical reversal was necessary. If I immersed them further in the current realities of the workplace and then immediately engaged them in a typical socioeconomic analysis of the global economy, I might destabilize the participants further into paralysis and anxiety. Rather, I needed to build a pedagogical framework that began with hopeful possibilities while integrating new understandings of the problems they had named. In this way, the pedagogy was a hermeneutic activity by bringing into "conversation" alternative explanations of the existing reality for each person.

Furthermore, the participants needed to stay rooted in the personal by intensively researching the rhythms of their daily life that so troubled them. Only then would it be possible to broaden their analyses toward global socioeconomics. Therefore, the process was revised as follows to constitute the second spiral of action research:

> *Moment One Is ProblemPosing, where they share anecdotal tales that brought them to the course and where they develop general themes as a critique of the existing cultural constructions of working and living. These themes are connected to the holistic model of sustainability, constituting a new lens or framework. Then they design their own images for their future as a hope-filled activity.*
>
> *Moment Two Is Immersion in Alternatives, which begins with completing a work genealogy. This facilitates a self-analysis of these past work experiences (including family and ethnic messages) and the identification of personal principles on which they wish to build their work lives. Then through immersion tours to visit five individuals who were exemplars of sustainable living and working, they identify sustainability-in-action. This enhances the formation of hope beyond their perceived limit-situations and provides new images of sustainable lifeways.*
>
> *Moment Three Is Cultural Analysis, where participants undertake a self-audit concerning money, life energy/time, consumption, and job to heighten their consciousness of daily working and living habits. They explore in depth the cultural myths that shape these habits and identify what aspects of these relationships are not sustainable for themselves or the Earth. They plan and undertake various actions for change.*
>
> *Moment Four Is Socioeconomic Analysis of the neoliberal global economy and the contrasting principles of bioregionalism. They discuss the impact of changes in*

> *technology, culture, money, and work on themselves and other social sectors around the globe. They link their consumption to global structures of production. From this analysis, participants redefine work for themselves and incorporate various principles of sustainability into their work ethic. They carry out a community analysis of what kinds of work are required.*
>
> *Moment Five Is Group and Personal Reflection, where the congruence between these sustainability principles and their existing working and living is determined. They participate in an inner search for a sense of vocation or an image of their true work. From this they identify a major action for change.*
>
> *Moment Six Is Action Planning, where the participants engage in writing a vision statement, action goals, and timelines. Furthermore, they research the people, skills, and informational resources they require to carry out their action plan. They practice skills for negotiating and communicating their action plan.*
>
> *Moment Seven Is Celebration, where participants retell the story of their journey through the course and situate their action within the concept of a sustainable community contribution. They reflect on the collective journey of the class—both the learning that occurred and their hopes for the future. The participants plan regular gatherings to continually share their journeys and to provide feedback to the research.*

In sum, the “phases” were considered pedagogical “moments,” a concept related to “historical moment” in which the activities are historically situated. Canadian Deborah Barndt (1989) has taken the notion of moment from Gramsci’s notion of “conjuncture.” Gramsci drew a distinction between the structural and conjunctural in a political analysis of society; the structural being relatively permanent social relations and the conjunctural being temporary, fluid social relations. The course involved “naming the moments,” in Barndt’s terminology, in which participants named the various aspects of the conjuncture of forces on them, bringing them to the course and opening them to the possibility of transformation. The notion of moment represents the iterative motion of the research in which each moment is listed in a linear, progressive manner but in which, in actuality, the reflection, research, and action of each moment are continuously interwoven. Rather than the process being unidirectional or repetitive cycles, they were iterative as each “phase” was revisited several times—each time including a deeper process for reflecting on their experiences from various analytical frameworks. Finally, it was expected that the changes would be multileveled, including changes in consciousness, physical being, daily habits, workplace, and community activity. These moments spanned 14 sessions over four months.

SOCIAL AND LEARNING RELATIONS WITHIN THE COURSE

Building Community Relations

Both as participatory action research and as radical transformative education, the relationship between the instructor/researcher with the learners/participants was intended to be fundamentally dialogical and democratic. The intent was to stimulate a self-sustaining process of critical, ethical analysis, and realized action that was not impositional and that respected each individual's viewpoints and choices. Realizing that any educative encounter comprises power relations, the task was to democratize the relations as much as possible without retreating into teacher authoritarianism or intellectual defensiveness. Rather, through the "pedagogy of the question," as Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) called it, the participants and I could begin to unpeel the cultural layers that one faces in daily life. This was reciprocal and involved mutual learning. It was directive only in the sense that I placed a new body of knowledge about sustainability among us for all of us to assess and determine its usefulness for transforming working and living.

The participants needed to be ensured that the classroom and interview space was a safe space for them to gain distance from their cultural habits, test out new ideas, and express emotions. This took time, but eventually resulted in an environment of caring. I considered it my responsibility to continually learn more about their cultural practices and beliefs, their aspirations and fears, and their social location so that the learning process was responsive to their needs. I also considered it my responsibility to share my ethical commitments, to become intimately familiar with the ecological region in which we all lived, and to seek spiritual direction myself so that I could facilitate these connections in an authentic way.

As explicated above, one example of the dialogical relations within the course was the interactive nature of its development. I revised the pedagogical process after the first interviews and then presented a sustainability framework that I felt responded to their issues. They then revised the framework as we journeyed through the course. Similarly, at key decision points in the course, we interactively chose either new collective or individual directions. In this manner, the flow of the course was emergent through openness to their change processes.

Participants and Local Social Movements

One of the purposes of the course was to bring the participants into contact with leaders in local social movements and mentors of sustainable working/living. This was based on the premise that social movements are centers of counter-hegemonic thought and collective political action, important for advancing elements of a sustainable society. Exposing participants to social movement members illustrated the diversity and dynamism of alternatives already existent in the society that prefigure new societal relations. It also held the possibility of generating a network of supportive mentors that could continuously encourage them in their future endeavours. It is important that these exemplars also created a natural link for choosing ongoing volunteer commitments, particularly in social movements, once the course was over. It is from here that the transformative learning process extends beyond the classroom into the learning sites of social movements as collective energy for social transformation (Welton, 1993). Although face-to-face contact was privileged in this course, the participants were also familiarized with social movements around the globe working on parallel initiatives in their own political and economic contexts, so that they understood that they were part of a globewide movement for change.

ANALYZING THE FIRST ACTION

The Second and Third Interview and Participant Journals

In addition to the first interview, the participants met with me for an individual conversation during the midpoint of the course and one month after course completion. Scaffolding upon a growing understanding of group and personal issues, each conversation had a general purpose in attempting to understand the common and unique experiences. Each conversation flowed according to the experiences and feelings that each participant chose as central to them (Fenwick, 1996). I supported the directionality of the conversations with written questions to ensure that I inquired into my themes of interest if they did not spontaneously arise (Appendix D).

I was most interested in assisting participants to articulate the shifts that they experienced in their thinking and in their daily action. Maguire (1987) and other feminist action researchers defined this as assisting participants to "name their reality." Often, the participants found it difficult to articulate their experiences, and therefore I would offer descriptive words or summative concepts to which they could respond. Metaphor became a powerful tool to describe their changes—descriptions that evoked power and meaning but were never fully explainable. I also probed their assumptions and beliefs to understand how the narrators made meaning and whether they acted in accordance with or diverged from their meaning structures.

In an informal way, I was using an autobiographical method in which participants began to "story" their lives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1991). Although I used this method formally in the pedagogy, it was clear that I could not understand their change process without backgrounding their life history and work history. This backgrounding took place in the individual interviews and was key to catalyzing the participants' understandings and my analysis as well as guiding the pedagogical process. Polkinghorne (1988) suggested that narratives help people to organize their experience into meaningful episodes. Tara Fenwick (1996) discovered through this method, as did I, that the talk moved beyond the boundaries of work and change as the storying became an "unfolding of self, in all its complex obsessions and paradoxes, insights and delusions, structures and fluid dynamism" (28).

Honoring these but probing tactfully required a high degree of self-awareness and intuitive guidance and was profoundly draining. I learned that I could have only two of these conversations in a day without becoming emotionally overloaded. I in turn required several confidantes and constant journalling to make sense of these relationships. Many times I felt honored by their feedback. One example of this feedback, a comment from Sarah that rejuvenated my flagging energy, was, "Beth, you are a visionary, a fine educator, and a powerful catalyst. You have a great deal of inner substance and are able to call that forth from all kinds of people."

By the second and third conversations, I was keenly aware of the complexities in my relationships with the participants as well as my responsibilities in accompanying them through an intense process. I did not consider that I was there to discover how to "make" people change in the usual instrumentalist format, either as a researcher or teacher. From the first conversation with the participants, they themselves all expressed their desire for change and, in many cases, transformative change, as they each defined it. As the course and interview conversations developed in an intertwined way, I more clearly understood my role in having invited them into a safe space. In this space, they could engage themselves, each other, the provided texts, and myself in an effort to determine what change they desired and how to create it for themselves.

For the participants as a group, I wove in rituals throughout the course that would provide affirmation and hope when they were confused or highly anxious. Both Jennifer and Gena, respectively, wrote, "I appreciated your efforts to ensure a comfortable safe environment at a time when one sometimes felt exposed," and "I loved the honoring rituals that you wove in." Ky, a teacher, understood the emergent nature of the process and wrote, "As the course content was flexible, changes were [made] . . . to meet the personal needs of the participants; . . . a pleasure [to experience]!"

Mutuality was a key part of my relationship with them, so I made them aware of my questions, my passion to be loyal to their struggles, and the change processes that I personally experienced. As Dan wrote, "Within three classes, you feel as if you are dealing with a friend and equal as opposed to a 'teacher.'" Although the overall process was intense, the mutuality made this process different from a therapeutic process in that we all articulated our process of change and cared for one another. Through this sharing, I endeavoured to illustrate not only the difficulties of the change process, but also that I would provide some of the necessary processes for affirmation and protection. Various snippets of feedback confirmed their recognition of my contribution, "I found Beth to be generous in her sharing" (Heather) and "She put her whole being into the course" (Rose). This relationship of mutuality extended to the other guest instructors as well:

> *Liz, Myles, and Beth, besides being instructors, when you were not, you became participants in the course. I think this allowed us to strengthen our relationships with you. You were not just instructors teaching students. I think this helped make this an excellent opportunity for exploring new pathways. (Jennifer)*

Another participant responded in the evaluation, "I appreciated your commitment to the class and all of your willingness to learn along with us. Each of you has made a difference in the transformation of my living/working" (Dan). They also recognized the supportive contribution of their classmates: "Support of my co-learners was very important and I feel as if a new network/community of friends has been started" and "I felt supported and nurtured by each member of our group and was able to share my vision and to hear their vision of the world we would like to create."

I often went to them as a group or as individuals to ask questions about my ideas and interpretations. I believe that this openness and responsiveness developed a level of trust that encouraged the participants to share intimate details of their experiences that many of them had avoided sharing in any detail in the first conversation. Many of these experiences were painful, but proved important for unraveling their histories and enhancing our mutual understandings of their actions and viewpoints. Sometimes we would be misty eyed together or silent as we pondered the depth and meaning of their experiences. As much as Sally enjoyed the entire course, she said that she most looked forward to our individual conversations, in which she could reflect this deeper level.

Nevertheless, the participants understood that the responsibility for change remained their responsibility. My role was to raise a variety of ways of thinking and action possibilities for them to consider, as well as to provide support mechanisms that gave them a measure of freedom and safety. Stephen Brookfield referred to this as the position of empathetic provocateur. In the final evaluation form, Kate understood, "I learned that we must create the 'answer' for ourselves."

This mutuality also meant that in the middle of the course, they projected their frustration and anxiety onto me in the interviews. As Angie acknowledged, "The only problem I had is that this course opened up so many questions for me that I was struggling with the enormities of the imbalances in my life." Gena reacted by considering the course ideas to be impositional. Upon carefully considering this group phenomenon, I realized that this was the most difficult part of the change process: The course had destabilized many aspects of their lives, and no new order had yet been reached. The natural response was to target me, for I was the catalyst.

The retreat occurred within a week after these mid-point conversations, and for many of the participants this was a major breakthrough into a new field of vision, leaving behind the anxiety. They were alternately apologetic and grateful that I was persistent in prodding them to think, persistent in my caring, and maintained my desire to walk with them through the dark valley. Gena exclaimed that "I have broken through the wall." Heather added:

> *At first, I believe that most of us were groping with what the course was about, where will it take us. After that initial confusion, I truly connected and found myself reflecting deeply about what Beth was doing. I have the whole picture now and found the techniques to be very effective. . . . At first, it was a big puzzle to me. I could not see the relevance. However, as it developed further I grasped where it was taking me and I now believe that a new awareness of many facets of my life has been heightened. The opportunites out there are unlimited and there for the taking (emphasis in original).*

Upon reflection with a critical friend, I considered my position as similar to the ambiguity of parenting. As the nurturer, I was intensely loyal and willing to provide what was needed for growth and development, whereas as the guide I also needed to be the force against which they pushed in the search for independence. This time of frustration and anxiety was also linked to the social analysis section of the course. When we were engaged with personal-level issues, the relevance was clear and they were energized: "I have spent a lot of extra time on my own because it is all so relevant. This is not textbook stuff but real life" (Angie). Ky said, "Emphatically, the course was meaningful and relevant! A wonderful congruence in time and content to our current life situation." Sally concurred:

> *I feel that I've entered a magical castle and every course night there was a new door (one that glittered and shimmered) to open with new vistas to view, new ideas to explore, and new growth to happen within me. Thanks!!*

Yet, the participants found the social analysis section of the course to be "disturbing" and "causing a lot of turmoil for me." They struggled with a sense of paralysis: "I still have a problem believing that as a small group of people we can have an impact on the global community" and "It will leave people with little hope for their future if they have not explored alternatives first" (Gena and Angie). Yet, paradoxically, they also had a sense of agency: "Now that I'm more aware, it's my responsibility to make other people aware as well" and "Ignorance is no excuse not to do my part." In sum, the socioeconomic analysis prompted the following comments: "Scary to learn but insightful" (Kate) and

> *It's like the class opened my awareness to a whole new and huge picture. . . . I see that the global economy (how it is) plays a role, but I more clearly see the role (and potential) of individuals and then communities. (Gena)*

The contact with the participants has not ended; many of the participants chose to keep in touch with me, usually via email, requests for letters of reference, or input in a variety of ways that keeps me in touch with their unfolding changes. I have also established an annual gathering in early December that most of the participants continue to attend. The energy is high as they share their stories individually and as a group. I have also used this time to report back to them the progress of my research and elicit feedback. Most important, the group chose to continue meeting monthly over the past two years with revolving leadership.

The Hermeneutic Process

Transcripts were made of all three interviews for the majority of the participants, and each participant also kept a journal in which I asked for specific entries as well their own spontaneous journalling of the changes they were experiencing. Each participant also completed an extensive evaluation of the various course activities. Given the time pressures and intensity of teaching the course, it was not until after the course process was complete that I was able to analyze the transcripts of the three interviews and the journals. I was unable to keep a detailed analysis journal as I had anticipated, but I kept analytic memos of various insights as the process unfolded.

Understandings of praxis within action research specify that reflection and action ought to be simultaneous rather than sequential. Although first-level observation and analysis were occurring simultaneously, resulting in an emergent pedagogy, the issue was the lack of time to record the first-level analyses beyond analytic memos and to create a contemplative space for in-depth analysis. Nevertheless, with a deeper understanding of praxis, it is clear that my knowledge was shaping my action and that my actions were shaping my knowledge throughout the course process. So although praxis was occurring, it was not taken to successive levels of depth until after the process was over. This concurred with Carson and Sumara's (1997) ideas of research as living practice, in which, in a holistic practice, the process, producer, and product are cospecified (xv). So while one level of awareness and knowledge was being produced during the teaching, another was being produced during the analysis and writing, both as lived moments in the research process. In sum, different relations are made available for interpretation at different moments. Therefore, the process of teaching, the process of writing, the relations between the participants and myself, and my own evolving self-understandings were integrally related as one intertwined rhythm of lived awareness.

With the end of the course and the interview transcripts and journals in hand, the task was to "create explanations, pose hypotheses, develop theories, and link your story to other stories. To do this, you must categorize, synthesize, search for patterns, and interpret the data you have collected" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992: 127). As many researchers have described it, it was a messy process in which I often worked intuitively and relied on flashes of mid-night insight. Nevertheless, I endeavoured to develop understanding in a systematic way as well as to validate or reject these intuitions and insights. It required both the abilities of surrender and discipline: opening myself to "sensibilities, insights and proclivities," as well as "channeling and evolving the understandings" in a disciplined way (Lofland & Lofland, 1984: 135). The real challenge was remaining conscious of *how* I was developing the analyses.

My first phase with the data was the attempt to utilize grounded theory (Corbin, 1999). I began trying to code the data according to theme and chronologically by life story. Yet, the breadth and depth of the data—just the richness of one word or one phrase in stacks of transcripts—quickly overwhelmed me. Even after a firsthand exploration of a computer program to facilitate this process, I got lost in the detail of the data and the enormity of the task. Moving toward broader and broader categories and a synthesis appeared a long way off, and I felt alienated from the people that I knew so well.

After several months I determined that I was more interested in the essence of each story. In retrospect, this descriptive coding phase was vital for familiarizing me with the stories and developing some initial matrices of understanding. I was also alerted to the need to be "constantly on guard against the seductive illusions of technique" (Barrett; as cited in van Manen, 1990: 3).

The second phase was to turn to a phenomenological interpretative format as a way to increase my thoughtfulness about and connectedness with the stories (Bergum, 1989; van Manen, 1990). Hermeneutic phenomenological research is meant to reintegrate part and whole to uncover and describe the essence of a phenomenon that can awaken a fuller and more meaningful understanding of everyday existence. Phenomenology, in van Manen's description, is a theory of the unique; what is essentially irreplaceable about the lifeworld (7). This approach approximated my desire to overcome fragmented thinking as evidenced in the modern condition. I resonated deeply with Vangie Bergum's (1989) phenomenological writing about the transformation to motherhood. Therefore, I began trying to emulate this form of writing and re-approached the "data" by writing a holistic theme statement and selective theme statements for each participant. The selective theme statements built on the descriptive coding and enabled me to begin grouping the codes into larger themes for each person.

As I worked with the stories, I picked out three participants whose stories exemplified three phases of transformative change: Ky and Garth, who had already left their jobs and were working at transforming their family and work life in a holistic way; Kate, who was already considering leaving her job but was struggling with whether or not and how to do it; and Sally, who felt unable to change at the beginning but experienced a release of her sense of agency and was now thinking about making change. At this point, I was able to devise an outline of the transformation process.

When I had completed the statements for each person, I gave them to a critical friend who is extensively experienced in phenomenological research in an evaluative setting. Although she validated some of my interpretations, she challenged my lack of openness and my need to force the data into my already prescribed notions of transformative change and existing social analyses. In fact, she challenged me on what transformative change really is and whether or not it was even present in these stories. Emotionally overloaded from being in my own transformative process and needing to rethink the notion of transformation, I put the data aside. With the advice of my advisor, I began writing the literature review as a way to rethink the modernist roots of transformative learning and the definition of transformation as it is currently conceptualized within the field of adult education.

At the annual gathering of the participants I decided to present the details of the transformative process that I had devised to that point. Although they affirmed many aspects of it, they also challenged some of the conceptual devices I had used. More important, they questioned the need for one more researcher to "unveil" the transformation process and the relevance of this. Kim emailed me the next day to say, "Do you see the butterfly come out of the cocoon or do you see the worn-out, useless cocoon?" She suggested that I was concentrating on the useless cocoon and not seeing the broader picture. In a further interchange, she wrote:

> *Perhaps transformation is like a butterfly; to want to examine a butterfly fully and its fine details, we kill it. Then, we don't really have a butterfly. For a butterfly is about its flight, its dance in the light and its delicacy. . . . I hope to retain the mystery aspect of transformation. The profound is to be experienced; . . . our words are limited, linear, and bound in space and time.*

She encouraged me to read Einstein, Bohm, and others in the New Science. Secondly, several participants felt that the process that I had detailed did not fully explain their experiences.

Deeply challenged, I continued the literature review, read Einstein and Bohm, and pondered the very purpose of my research. Was I in the process of killing the butterfly? Was I helping to disenchant the universe? Was I thinking in a fragmented, reductionist, linear way fully rooted in the modernist metanarratives? Where to go from here? Should I quit this alienating process of research altogether?

I began to realize that I was stuck in not believing in my own ability to understand and write up this research outside of the theoretical parameters and concepts of the critical tradition. According to Belenky et al. (1986), I excelled at procedural knowledge and parroting the language in academe, but I could not yet confidently construct my own knowledge. Although I deeply wanted to ensure that my writing voice and my lived action were congruent and would make a difference in the world, I could not shake off the shackles of external method and categorical thinking. I had spent over a year imitating others in my hermeneutic process, whereas the need was to invent. Juliet Corbin (1999) described this as the fine line between procedural efficacy and creativity.

This led to a critical juncture in my life—academic and otherwise. I could no longer compartmentalize my life or my thinking. My spirituality, my mothering, my partnering, my dreams, my teaching, and my writing were all intimately connected and needed to find their voice in my living and my writing at once and take a place beside all the other voices in my life and work. I was moving in the direction of what Du Bois (19__) called "passionate scholarship."

The hurdle, however, was "killing Virginia Woolf's angel of the house" (Hollingsworth, 1997: 484). The angel of which she spoke is the angel of womanly purity—the angel of inadequacy, guilt, and sacrifice. This angel constantly whispered about my inability to challenge big theories on my own and lured me away from my own ideas to my daily duties. It blocked the openness I required to look again at the stories of the participants. As Woolf understood, "Had I not killed her she would have killed me. She would have plucked the heart out of my writing" (Woolf, 1931; as cited in Hollingsworth, 1997: 484). Even more seductive and irresistible, another angel sweetly sang tunes about seeking balance and harmony in my own life and attending to my relationships—before my children were grown and my partner had grown cold. This angel I hid in the closet now and then, for if I was to grant myself the deep space I required to think, invent, and write, I needed to hush her voice and realize that this contemplative time was as much congruent with my deeply held convictions about living life as was relational time. Eventually, I no longer saw it as a complex juggling of external competing demands. These all were facets of myself that required space and expression. I began to feel deeply in touch with my own rhythm of living, seeing this less as an "exceptional" time in my life but as the dynamic balance between reflection (writing/reading) and action (relational involvement) in my own life.

This meant that I re-approached the participant stories much more open to hearing their voices and to setting aside the academic theories and categories. With the desire to honor their voices as I had mine, I simply sat down and reread the stories—particularly the stories of participants who indicated that my conceptualizations did not fit their experience. What began to emerge were key concepts that were common to all participants but expressed in different ways. These were the concepts of disillusionment and fragmentation as described in Chapters Six and Seven.

I began writing their stories by interweaving the diverse expressions of these concepts and still trying to maintain a chronological story line. I was no longer attempting to pick apart the butterfly, but rather to see the dance that unfolded and continues to unfold. I myself had emerged out of the depths of the labyrinthian corridors into a dance of relatedness in which my movement was no longer restricted. I unfolded the meanings that each person held around these concepts and described their daily experiences that "held" meaning. Although it was important to let the participants speak for themselves, I paraphrased and explored various avenues to enrich the meanings behind the phenomena of which they spoke. I expanded my exploration to three more stories to ensure the dependability of my concepts.

As I worked at the first level of description to accurately depict their experiences, I began to see the multiple layers and webs of meaning, ideologies, and obligations. They felt caught in these webs of meanings, and these conflicting messages created immense tension and conflict. I moved to a second level of analysis then, a level of interpretive synthesis that examined these webs of meanings as they are culturally shared, as well as how individual participants came to terms with the conflicting sometimes in paradoxical ways.

I also engaged in an ethical analysis that searched to go one level deeper than theme derivation by questioning what appeared as obvious explanation (Slaughter, 1989; as cited in Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994). Fuchs (1993) called this viewing the data from the inside and outside simultaneously. This resulted in a breakthrough understanding of the counterside of transformative learning—restorative learning. I began to see the movements of both transformation and restoration in the interaction of the participants with the course resources. This "discovery" pinpointed the limitations of my existent "theories-in-use," and my expansion of thinking is detailed in Chapters Nine and Ten.

The third-level analysis required a distanciation from both the literature and the stories—a bird's eye view—to see what threads had emerged out of the labyrinth of the first and second level analysis. This was predicated on Ricouer's (as cited in Oh, 1986) dialectical hermeneutics that sought to move between understanding (gained through embeddedness) and explanation (gained through distanciation). I began to correlate the literature with the participant experiences to identify the empty spaces that could not explain certain phenomena. My developing social analysis also began to identify the implications for working and living in this historical moment.

Beyond this, however, I sensed my "tacit" knowledge that there was yet another level of knowing not yet apprehended (Polanyi, 1966:25). This yielded an ontological exploration that was more concerned with a mode of being rather than a mode of knowing or the mode of doing (Byrne, 1998). This came closest to Ricouer's (1973; as cited in Oh, 1986) depth hermeneutics by understanding the paradoxical nature of my insights, that appear contradictory but may be different facets seen from different angles, or "differently situated consciousnesses" (19). Understanding, then, is a product of our being-in-the-world, where we project our own creative possibilities into the situations in which we find ourselves and view variously (Oh, 1986: 18). This analysis is presented in Chapter Ten.

Ensuring Interpretative Trustworthiness

In the qualitative research paradigm, the criteria of trustworthiness replaces the positivist notion of validity. Trustworthiness is considered a more appropriate concept that contains criteria more akin to qualitative assumptions about research. One criterion of trustworthiness is plausibility (Clandinin & Connelly, 1991) or credibility (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994), in which the portrayals of reality are believable and realistic. This was ensured by the reviews of critical friends and participant checks that confirmed or questioned my interpretations and conceptual constructs.

The second criterion is dependability, in which the development of the levels of analysis can be traced and the dependability of interpretation assessed. Particularly given my use of intuitive knowledge, it was important to keep an audit trail of my various approaches to analysis and developing interpretations. My own analytic memos throughout the course facilitation tracked my first-level analyses and later enabled me to systematically confirm or discard these ideas. Critical conversations with other researchers and with guest instructors who knew the participants, as well as memoing the analysis process, helped me to identify my preconditioned understandings that blocked or channeled my thinking in narrow ways. Member checks again brought humility to the process and the measure of dependability that I could ascribe to my representations.

A third criterion is transferability or "anticipatory accommodation" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994), in which others resonate with the analytic interpretation and transfer these understandings by reshaping them to their particular context. Although this was an unanticipated but hoped-for result, it was a jarring experience to have my own unique conceptual constructs and analytical ideas parroted back to me in conversation, directly or indirectly. I gave several presentations of my preliminary research, one to a community conference and one to an academic conference, and was pleased and disarmed by how powerful new concepts can be and how quickly they permeate common parlance. This made me very wary of ensuring that I was using dependable concepts that were authentic to the participant's understandings as well as to my broader analytic connections. I also learned not to share my "half-baked" findings until I was sure of my conclusions, for although my thinking changed, these preliminary concepts continued to circulate.

A fourth criterion is authenticity, in which multiplicity and complexity are part of the interpretative process. In different words, Eisner (1991) suggested that "it is a matter of being able to handle several ways of seeing as a series of differing views rather than reducing all views to a single correct one" (49). Of interest, particularly, were the apparently contradictory ethical stances that any one person held and how he/she made sense of these. Of interest also was the lack of congruence between understanding and acting. For this, Fuchs (1993) suggested the need to identify both the transindividual structures of consciousness and transubjective social structures that enable one to view cultural texts from both the inside and the outside. Though there was a systematic process, it also was closer to what Eisner (1999) called an artistic approach to research—in which one lays in the base colors and shapes and then works up, layer by layer, to an art form that has evocative facets of the micro and macro.

The difficulty here is that the participants may not agree with the interpretations of the social and cultural conditioning. Therefore, the task was to challenge my own presuppositions that inform my own normalizing judgements. As described previously, I had to come to terms with my own prejudices and the prejudices of the participants to approximate what Gadamer (1995) called a "fusion of horizons," in which my interpretation resonated with the participants as a rich understanding of their meanings. At other times, however, when my resulting social criticism departed from this resonance, the findings were brought into conversation with the existing body of knowledge, contrary explanations, and the review of my academic peers. Ricouer (1977; as cited in Oh, 1986) suggested that this occurs through the logic of probability in the following way:

> *If it is true that there is always more than one way of construing a text, it is not true that all interpretations are equal and may be assimilated to so called "rules of thumb." The text is a limited field of possible constructions. . . . It is always possible to argue for or against an interpretation, to confront interpretations, to arbitrate between them and to seek for an agreement, even if this agreement remains beyond our reach. (20)*

Within a critical vein, the fifth criterion is catalytic validity, in which the research has moved those who are participating to understand the world in a different way and enables them to transform it. It will be clear throughout the next five chapters that the participants did indeed find the research and pedagogical process to be altering at a personal level and to enhance their ability for self-direction. The final chapter contends with existing notions of transformation and what has been traditionally theorized as social-level transformation. Doing this required that I go out onto a limb and construct my perception of the world anew (Slaughter, 1989).

Ethical Dimensions

Formal ethical approval was granted by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Educational Policy Studies on the following bases, that:

- there were no underage or captive participants or procedural deception,
- the research intent was clear before participants registered in the course,
- the participants signed a consent form (Appendix E) and were verbally asked about taping the interviews,
- the participants could opt out at any time with no penalty or risk,
- the participants had opportunity to review the findings,
- there were implications through being graded for their participation,
- they remained anonymous in the final research text, and
- they signed a second consent to publish the findings and were informed of the grievance procedure if they were dissatisfied (Appendix E).

The Faculty of Extension was fully aware of the research intent and participated in administratively supporting the course. The participants had the option of choosing their own aliases, and all the data were held in the strictest of confidentiality so that no harm could result from participation in the research. The professionals carrying out the transcribing either worked with the aliases or signed a confidentiality form as well. Any changes that did occur in the thinking or daily habits as a direct result of the instruction were fully the choice and responsibility of the participants. At all times, the dignity and well-being of the participants were of utmost concern.

REVISING THE COURSE AND PLANNING A SECOND ACTION STEP

The second action research step consisted of offering the course a second time in Fall 2000 and utilizing the findings to inform replanning. Although I did informally gather survey information and engage in taped conversations with some of the new course participants, I did not officially use these data as a check on my findings. Rather, this second action step consisted of enhancing the development of my professional practice by incorporating the evaluation feedback from the first participants into the second offering of the course. These were primarily content and process changes.

The other significant action in this next "loop" of action research was making this course available in a variety of constituencies as a way for me to "give back" to the community and to offer my findings for those seeking a similar learning process. To date, four other invitations have been received to work with a diversity of groups as well as continuing to offer the course through the Faculty of Extension.

CHAPTER SIX

THREADING THE LABYRINTH: ADULT DISILLUSIONMENT

> *Disillusionment is an important part of the spiritual path. It is a powerful and fiery gate, one of the purest teachers of awakening, independence, and letting go that we will ever encounter. To be disillusioned is to be stripped of our hopes, imaginings, and expectations. But while it opens our eyes, the resulting pain all too often closes our hearts. The great challenge of disillusionment is to keep our eyes open and still remain connected with the great heart of compassion. (Kornfield, 1993: 268-269)*

INTRODUCTION: MID LIFE CRISIS OR SOMETHING ELSE?

Everyone who knew Dan during high school knew that all he wanted was a small house, white picket fence, a wife, and two kids. It seemed such a modest expectation; an expectation deemed worthy in Western society. But "it didn't work out that way." He experienced a dramatic upheaval through divorce, leaving him as the primary parent for two school-age children. For Dan, his cherished principles of honesty, integrity, and loyalty were equated with and manifested in this white picket fence image. In other words, being a good person was constituted of the equation of a white picket fence and living honorable ideals. Now at a crossroad, he asked, "Which of these [things] has to be changed? Maybe none of them have to be changed, but maybe they have to be reevaluated, . . . reassessed. I can't believe that any of those things are bad." He is questioning his principles and the material and relational expectations that make up this equation.

In fact, the questions about the equation go further to encompass his work and Dan's ambivalence about work constituting a fulfilled life:

> *I'm not making what I'm worth, . . . and society values people on how much they make, so I am not fulfilling my potential in a materialistic, monetary sense. . . . So the question is, is that the only way I view my life? Is that the only measure I use for my life?"*

He has chosen not to measure his life against the standard of monetary fulfillment, yet he is troubled by what ought to be an appropriate measure of fulfillment. This profound question around the measure of one's life, or appropriate signifiers of a life well lived, towered at the intersection of the life road for all of the 14 research participants.

According to Kate, the measure of one's life is not static; what is important changes over time. From the beginning of their marriage, it was important for Kate and her husband to be financially independent from their parents or any other support system. They conscientiously lived out the Protestant work ethic in their work lives, in terms of both professional achievements and frugality to eliminate home and car debts as soon as possible and generate savings for early retirement. But, in looking back on the road she has travelled, Kate said:

> *You spend the first part of your life doing what society expects you to. And you reach a point where you've done that and it's like, "Well, okay, now what? What am I supposed to do now? I've got two cars and the house and the kids and the husband. So now what?"... There's all that sort of building, and then comes retirement, right? I think you just question if that's really what its all about?*

Having completed the early "building" years and not being close to retirement, Kate wondered what comes in the middle of these two stages. Dan's question about fulfillment and Kate's question, "What is it all about?" were part of their problem posing process in the first interview.

The popular press and the life stage theorists would call Dan's and Kate's reevaluations of societal expectations a "midlife crisis" or adult "passage," replete with an Eriksonian developmental task. As Gail Sheehy (1976) suggested, midlife crisis is the predictable but pivotal development task of adulthood whereby individuals reexamine their purposes and life pattern. Either individuals become resigned and calcified, or they experience a renewal of purpose that represents a more authentic life structure (45-46). Erikson (1963) originally defined this as the choice between embracing generativity through the care and guiding of the next generation and slipping into stagnation through a retreat into self-concern and some form of invalidism (267). Is midlife crisis what Dan and Kate were experiencing, or is this just one facet of the prism from which to view their searching? Is midlife crisis a personal breaking out of cultural conventions toward authenticity, or does the desire for authenticity reflect a larger societal context that shapes this personal search?

In the first interview the participants generally shared three desires: the yearning to make a difference, the yearning for balance, and the yearning for change in their lives. The next three chapters examine the personal and social conditions that created these shared desires and then how the research course mediated these desires. Through the analysis, it became clear that the yearning to make a difference issued out of their experience of disillusionment. The yearning for balance issued out of the experience of fragmentation, and the yearning for change was the existence of a transformative opportunity in their lives.

This study reveals that the theory on midlife crisis does not go far enough in examining the social nature of these individual experiences. Under the appearance of a midlife crisis and the yearning to make a difference, the participants described a larger phenomenon of disillusionment that is shared at a social level. This chapter discusses the dimensions of disillusionment—disillusionment with doing a good job, disillusionment as a violation of ethics, disillusionment with the importance of work and material things, and disillusionment with public life. In Chapter Seven, underneath the desire for balance, we find the larger phenomenon of fragmentation. Chapter Eight discusses the third yearning, the yearning for change, against the actual process of transformation that the participants experienced during and after the course. Chapter Nine provides further analysis on disillusionment by carrying out an ethical analysis that reveals the conflicting ethics of the modern era. It provides further analysis on fragmentation by examining the mechanist structures that undergird the modern era. Drawing together these insights on contemporary social conditions, the final chapter, Chapter Ten, offers new understandings of transformative learning—what is typically excluded from the adult education literature—and how transformative learning can move beyond the fragmented thinking implicit within the modern era. It also offers reflections on transforming working and living for the new millennium.

YEARNING FOR BALANCE AND TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

> *The key issue of why I came to the course? To balance life . . . between the family, the job, and the studies, . . . how to keep it all going so that it's smooth, . . . how to balance all that out so that I don't feel like I'm being strangled. (Sally)*

The word *balance* was used in the course publicity and, unexpectedly, had a powerful resonance. Most of the 14 participants shared this desire for balance, predominately between work and home. In the first interview, many of the participants considered their lives "out of balance," and they described trying to "fit in" important relationships with family, extended family, and friends into the time left after work hours. Through the adult years, many of them realized that they had lost the focus on "what's really important" and were frustrated by the amount of space and priority they gave to their work lives.

Into the spaces left over after one's job, household tasks, and instrumental relational tasks were the needs for physical, intellectual and inner self-care, and meaningful relationship time. Irrespective of their age (from 33 to 64), their marital status, child status, income level, or gender, they all found it a struggle to spend adequate quality time just with themselves. Many of the participants increasingly felt torn apart by the "demands," whether self-imposed or externally imposed. Anxiety and guilt about multiple responsibilities and not "getting everything done" were prevailing emotional burdens. The "balance question" was often not framed as one of fulfillment, but one of survival. Sally asked, "How can I come away alive?" The "coming away alive" question was obviously a key question given the number of participant references to being burned out and the number of serious illnesses that participants had had in the preceding five years.

Parallel to this yearning for balance, many participants yearned to make a difference. Many of them had chosen a line of work that coincided with their deepest values but felt frustrated by their inability to act out their values. Despite the individual's workplace rank, they lacked the power to effectively enact their code of ethics or to encourage these ethics within organizational practices. For Anne, a manager in the health care system, the purpose of her work was the foremost reason for working. She said:

> *I believe I'm working to make a difference. I also believe that a lot of the time I'm not making any difference at all. . . . I'm in supposedly a position of influence over many people, but it's just a real struggle to feel that the purpose is still there and still meaningful.*

Not only was the issue of making a difference one of ethics and values, it was also one of contending with longer work hours, more demands, undesirable changes in work tasks, and increasingly centralized decision making. These changes exacerbated the lack of control many of the participants felt over their work tasks and working conditions.

Interestingly, the participants did not see the issues of balance and making a difference as personal issues only. When asked what they considered the most pressing issues in society, many gave examples of what they considered to be ethical issues in society at large. They considered their core principles of "honesty, integrity, fairness, courage, treating others with respect and equity, tolerance, dependability, loyalty, helping others, the common good, and working hard" not present significantly in publicly shared life. In particular, they did not see them present at the institutional level—public sector organizations charged with meeting social needs, governments charged with governing society, churches charged with spiritual leadership, or corporations charged with generating production and employment. They also expressed the seeming powerlessness of one person to make a difference in various social issues. They had no idea of how one citizen could possibly make a significant difference on the pressing environmental and social issues heard daily in the news. How, then, do these issues of "balance" and "making a difference" relate to larger societal trends?

THE HARWOOD STUDY

In 1995 the Harwood Group (1996) completed an American public issues study entitled "Yearning for Balance." They found the yearning for balance and the desire to make a difference to be general social phenomena. It was found that these two issues were prevalent throughout "all walks of life" across the United States. To their surprise, people's deepest aspirations were nonmaterial despite the media images of a consumptive American Dream. For instance, 66% of those who participated in the national opinion survey would have been more satisfied with their lives if they had been able to spend more time with family and friends, and 56% would have been more satisfied with less stress. Almost half (47%) said that they would have been more satisfied if they were doing more to make a difference in the community. Seventy percent of the survey respondents were satisfied with their personal economic situation. Most of them agreed that they did not need more money or possessions; and, in fact, 82% agreed that most people buy and consume far more than they need. Although the individuals considered responsibility, family life, friendship, generosity, and faith to be important guiding principles for themselves, they saw the rest of society guided by the drive for wealth and material goods. This drive was cited as causes for family breakdown, crime, and loss of community, but there was an ambivalence about material wealth and prosperity, for it is considered "the American way" that marks their collective "success" as a nation. Despite the difficulties enumerated in letting go of material wealth, the study concluded with the assertion that people are ready to consider real possibilities for lifestyle change and for working through the ambivalence regarding materialism. Although the majority of people are unconnected to religious institutions, most of them have spiritual yearnings that relate to this shift away from a materialistic lifestyle.

Other theorists take a very different view. They have disparaged the sullenness (Borgmann, 1992), narcissistic individualism (Lasch, 1979), unconsciousness (Saul, 1995) moral relativism (Bloom, 1987), and post-Christian or even anti-Christian ethos (Easum, 1993; Mead, 1991) of North American society. Yet, the Harwood Group (1996) study indicated that the majority of citizens have a desire for worthy values and priorities both in their own lives and within society at large. They stated their willingness to be responsible in their relationships with self, the larger human community, and the Earth.

The purpose of this study was to examine the mitigating factors; for instance, how possible is it for people to shift to a lifestyle that has less stress, more time with family and friends, and more involvement in community activities? It also attempts to examine how this kind of shift may be related less to life stage theory than to a broader social experience that blocks the individual ability to enact principles and live in a sustainable manner.

This study begins by acknowledging that this is a complex issue with many passageways, as in a labyrinth. Questions are posed, such as, What lies underneath this "out of balance" feeling? Conversely, what comprises a state of balance? Is balance a code word for perhaps a broader kind of social experience? What does "making a difference" mean, and how is this connected to ethics? Finally, what were participants seeking from a course entitled *Transforming Working and Living*? In other words, what is the meaning behind the desire to transform toward balance and making a difference? As we shall see, many of their insights begin to provide a guide to the labyrinth of adult life in our current societal context. The two key insights that the participants continuously repeated throughout the interviews were the connection between disillusionment and making a difference.

THREADS OF DISILLUSIONMENT

Earlier in the chapter, Kate and Dan described the strong cultural messages of "what society expects." Young adults are expected to strive for physical, material, and emotional independence; and this independence is symbolized by a house, car, well-paying job, mate, and kids. Yet the lives of the majority of the participants did not necessarily conform to this image. Furthermore, as participants travelled their road of life, various events created a growing disillusionment that crept into the nooks and crannies of their adult lives. Most of the participants described the growing realization that—whether in work, school, love, community organizations, or politics—the ideals and principles that they cherished were not fully present. Yet these ideals informed what it meant to do a good job and be a good person. The ground between the ideal and reality is the ground of disillusionment.

In my initial research conversations with the participants, they energetically released the accumulated experiences of disrespect, dishonesty, disloyalty, indignity, and injustice that shaped many aspects of their adult living. They described these as disillusionment. The faces of disillusionment that they described were:

- disillusionment with "doing a good job,"
- disillusionment as a violation of ethics,
- disillusionment with the importance of work and material things, and
- disillusionment with public life.

The following stories of disillusionment are significant not only in terms of adult development but, more important, for providing insight into the nature of working and living in our society and the "something else" that this might be "all about."

Disillusionment with "Doing a Good Job"

Anne

After doing years of rewarding work on the front lines in palliative care, Anne "took time off" from the nursing profession to raise her three children. After 10 years she returned to the nursing profession into a management position. As a young nurse, she knew that she made a difference at the bedside of individual patients. Now, to make an even larger impact, she wanted to share this knowledge with young nurses under her leadership:

> *I still have an even stronger belief that if I can teach people some of the things that I know about how to work with people, I can be part of making a greater impact, . . . [because] not everyone knows how to make a difference.*

Anne saw her impact in people's lives—her ability to offer "comfort," compassion, and "gentleness"—as an integral part of her nursing practice. "If you're working in palliative care, you need to be able to know how to comfort; and if you don't, you can make the best darned bed in town, but it doesn't make a difference." For Anne, making a difference was about orienting her nursing practice toward the individuals, not the nursing functions, and knowing the "appropriate responses in [a] particular situation." The difference, then, is a relational quality—so that "clients feel they've been helped"—in a way "that supports them." "It is spiritual work and it is important, but you can't explain that to everybody you work with because it isn't valued." For Anne, making a difference is moving beyond functionality toward ministering to people's physical *and* emotional needs on their life journey—to make it more comfortable and gentle during a particularly difficult human time. She saw this as her spiritual gift to the world.

Anne has felt what it is to make a difference, and her desire to be in management was motivated by the opportunity to share this knowledge with others. Yet, what does it mean to make a difference? To make a difference is to provoke change, to make something different than what is already. The phrase "to make" infers a sense of agency. Most specifically, it is a verb of causality, where with one's actions one can cause something to exist or to occur. It is to see oneself as a maker or creator through action in the world and hence as having an impact. To see oneself as a maker or creator is also to take responsibility for what is made, a responsibility for having made a difference. Finally, making a difference implies that a difference needs to be made, that the "what is" needs a change in form or quality or it lacks something that one can give. In this way it is an offering of oneself—a gift of self. It is also evidence of having been in the world and having mattered. It is seeing a reflection of oneself in the world around you.

For Anne, making a difference equated to "doing a good job." Shortly after she began in her management position, significant cuts in public funding "turned the health world upside down," creating "confusion" and a "rat race of work." Nevertheless, in her perennial optimism she saw this as creating an opportunity to experiment and put in place some clear ideas about "what health reform could mean." As a public health manager in a smaller region, she felt that her public health unit could be "leaders within the system" to demonstrate the "right way to go." But the optimism was short-lived:

> *I think when we got going [we] realized nothing's ever going to change because people are going to cling to what they knew, and they're going to dig their heels in, and the politics are going to say, "You can't do the right thing; you have to do the politically correct thing." . . . I think this was really a blow that hit both my boss and me in the gut, because you just look at it and you think, People don't want to do a good job! They want to preserve their little salary or their little status.*

She realized that people are not motivated by doing a good job as she is, but by salary, status, and political correctness. Anne went on to say that perhaps she was naïve in thinking that individuals in a helping profession would be strongly motivated by wanting to meet the needs of clients. She became more disillusioned with senior management because their motivation was competing for business, and their judgments were guided by not offending board members:

> *And I feel a lot of the time we're respecting things that are wrong. . . . Let's not [even] use the word respect, because it doesn't fit there. . . . The CEO pays very close attention to the political agenda and very little attention to the management; . . . for us, we would see that the clients would come first, and we would build the services around what the clients need. He would see the politics first, and keeping the staff happy second, and the clients last, and that's . . . not unique. I guess I have not until this stage of my life realized that health is big business!*

The realization that health is big business meant competitiveness among regions and keeping up "the image and false picture" on the cocktail circuit: "That's the disillusioning part. . . . Then you also have a personal life. How much energy does one person invest in trying to change this very strongly entrenched system, at what risk to your own self?" The pressure of overwork, disillusioning realizations, and lack of efficacy create a condition of personal risk.

Thus, what is the nature of disillusionment? *Webster's* (1979) called disillusionment "the condition of being disenchanted; to be left without illusion" (325). To be enchanted is to be moved deeply and attracted to a lovely vision—a vision that garners our admiration and even dedication. As Anne described, she had a strong vision of what health care ought to be: "a responsive, accessible, empowering, and collaborative health system . . . working in partnership with clients." This vision and the attendant principles have been worthy of her deepest dedication—principles that she thought she shared with the institution tasked with caring about the health of the population. The disillusionment was discovering that these principles do not drive the health care system.

The word *illusion*, derived from the Latin root *illudere*, means either to mock or to deceive with a misleading image of reality. What is apparent or open to view is not what actually is. For Anne, the health "system," driven by politics and big business, mocks the vision she has carried with her for years. Suddenly, the purpose that Anne ascribed to her work was mocked by the "reality." She began to realize that the vision with which she was working was profoundly out of step with the larger dynamics unleashed within the health care system. Despite what she knew about making a difference, politics and business principles are the new operating framework. This created a serious disjuncture for her, or, as she called it, "a blow that hit me in the gut." She has experienced violence at one of the most primary levels, the gut, where moral intuitions reside. She chastised her naivete, yet still held up the noble vision of what a helping and healing profession is all about. The reality she now saw was tearing away the illusions that either the system would express her ideals or that she could find adequate space within the system to enact her vision. She wondered if she could "do a good job" under these circumstances. Could she make a difference in an entrenched system without risking herself—her "self" in terms of identity—and her own physical health?

In taking on a position with some power to make change, Anne had hoped to be a "shining light" in her profession, and she has had some success, despite the self-doubt. They were given a community-based budget and told to manage it well. They worked "like crazy" to do all the things they were expected to, but then

> *the message was, :You're really making everyone else mad," because there was an element of success there. . . . .Somebody told me once, there can be no excellence in the public service, and I think they're right, because what we're basically being told is just "Just keep it quiet. Do a reasonable job, but don't shine." . . . But that's the kind of stuff that has become disheartening.*

Moderating her success for political expediency violates her deepest sense of what it meant to be a health professional and her philosophical vision for the health and well-being of a society. To link health to politics and business concerns was profoundly offensive to her, and this contradiction steadily ate away at her vision for creating change in the system. It provoked substantial self-doubt and "soul searching."

> *Somehow [I] got into a negative way of— because of the disillusionment, I guess, about the system—thinking, Gad, have I misread everything all my life? Is everything really awful, and I just have been Pollyanna with my prisms and thinking like Mary Tyler Moore in that movie* Ordinary People, *as long as everything is neat and tidy and great?*

As an optimist, she did not want to think negatively or hopelessly. But she wondered about how she viewed reality and whether she saw only the surface neatness and not the chaos and untidiness of the world underneath the surface. This took her into a soul-searching process which Meister Eckhart (as cited in Fox, 1983) described: "The ground of the soul is dark" (135). Matthew Fox called this part of the journey as the *via negativa*, "the emptying of images in the darkness, in subterranean passages" (135). So this is one thread unfolding in the dark labyrinth where illusions drop away and a search for the truth of reality is sought.

Anne saw behind the institutional scenes how the illusion of excellence was created. Indeed, the most important thing is to create the image of success, not to actually achieve authentic effectiveness. Her response was be disheartened, to lose heart or lose courage. "So you learn then, there's no point to speaking. . . . Do we have the energy to go to these meetings where we're going to be treated like pariahs?" The hopes that she had and the partial successes that they had wrought are not welcome in the system, and they are treated as outcasts. Swimming upstream has taught her to silence herself and not be seen, as a way to preserve her spirit, her "self." She worried about becoming cynical toward the contradictions between the rhetoric and the reality, but the control that she thought she would have in a management position to create something innovative appears limited. The question she asked was whether she could persevere within the system and withstand the assaults on her integrity.

Finally, Anne asked, "Why now?" Why is it now that she is "feeling like everything is just really not what I thought it was"?

> *Disillusionment should have come when I was twenty-five and a young, naïve little soul and thinking the world was going to be perfect, and I found out it wasn't. Why? Why now? . . . I'm in my late forties. . . . I've lived long enough that I've seen lots of pain and sadness and tough times. . . . I really don't know why that's affected me so much. . . . I shouldn't be disillusioned now.*

Let us hold Anne's question "Why now?" as we explore other narratives of disillusionment among two people who are not managers, but rather a professional in the corporate sector and a support person in the public sector.

Kate

In taking her professional home economics training into the corporate world, Kate learned that adult life means tradeoffs. Given her and her husband's goal to work toward early retirement, the trade-off that most dominated Kate's life was between working and parenting. She questioned the life plan that society expected, and she wondered about the husband/kids/house/two-car scenario in terms of what life was really all about. These questions were catalyzed by the push of purposelessness at work and the pull to be with her children. She was a very conscientiousness mother and took pride in her good parenting, but she realized that if they were to reach their financial goals, she needed to work full-time while their "earning potentials are highest." This "tradeoff" and the delicate balancing of factors had been acceptable to her until now. One of the factors was her ambivalence about leaving the workforce:

> *I have this fear too from working for so many years: What will happen to me when I stop? What'll I do? . . . I don't want to be totally financially dependent on my husband. I want to maintain what I have right now in terms of my employability. . . . I don't want to just throw that all away, because I may need it some day, right?*

Kate was now scrutinizing the tradeoff made to work full-time and provide more income in their household because the public utility that she had worked with for 12 years had undergone amalgamation, reorganization, and "downsizing." The result was that her current work now involved none of her original training, and she saw little purpose or direction in her daily work:

> *Basically for the past 1 1/2 years it has been turmoil in terms of my work—no clear role or job description. Now I am in [this new] department. . . . The idea was that the functions that we used to do would be carried with us, but it wasn't real clear about what came and what didn't come. So right now I am in the middle of doing real technical [work]. . . . and I'm like, "Ah, what am I doing here?"*

With no clear purpose in the organization, her motivation and creativity have significantly decreased. As long as the work was fulfilling, she could justify the time spent there. But with a young family and important tradeoffs being made, she questioned, "Am I doing the right thing? Should I be working? Or should I just throw in the towel or just take some time off and think for awhile?"

The purposelessness of her work role was compounded by being stripped of any real decision-making power and the resources to do her job well. She considered the organization to be run by "an old boys club." If you were in, then you had some decision-making power. If you were not, then you needed to be given clear objectives: "This is your role; this is what you are supposed to do." When the old boys club didn't provide these objectives, then she felt guilty for being paid but not contributing. She wanted to say "This is what I accomplished," but her sense of control over her work plans now was deteriorating, and there were too few employees to carry out the tasks:

> *There has always been a [values] conflict [at work], but what has changed is that I don't have any kind of control now. [Before] I just took [the job description] and made it what would meet that description. Now I feel like there is nothing really to grab onto and make some plans on and accomplish. . . . They give lip service to wanting to continue to do all that, but now there is only really two of us doing what at one time a group of six did. So how much commitment is there?*

Kate had always sensed her lack of power in a male-dominated organization. First, in an organization of several hundred, there were only 20 women professional staff and only two in upper management. Moreover, the power connections of the old boys club and the value conflicts set her at odds with the organization.

Nevertheless, she was more than willing to work hard and independently in return for a way to contribute and some recognition for her contribution. She was a "good performer," believed in excellence, took responsibility seriously, and conscientiously gave her energies to the company over the years. In fact, as a supervisor for a brief period of time, she said:

> *[I had a] sort of corporate brainwashing: "Everything's for the company," and people need to contribute to the company, and I think to some degree I even maybe set aside the human side of things a bit. . . . I guess I was focussed on, these people need to produce, right? . . . They're being paid here; they've got to produce, and they're going to do it.*

As a supervisor, she gave all of her energies to the corporate mandate, willing to submerge the "human side of things" to achieve the goal of production. She felt that this way of working was necessary to demonstrate her commitment to the company:

> *People are relying on me, and I have to get done what needs to get done, because I've got these people who report to me, and I have to make sure it all happens and*

> *all keeps working. I took that on as my responsibility. Thank God that something happened [reorganization] and I didn't keep doing that.*

Now, she had the dawning realization that the reverse commitment to her as an employee who wanted to make a meaningful contribution did not exist. The recent changes constantly violated Kate's strong work ethic. The illusion that was falling away was the corporate commitment to her job function and therefore a valuing of the work that she was there to perform. She saw the rhetoric now simply as "lip service," in which the allegiance extended no further than the words.

Kate felt that she made an important contribution to the "common good" when producing educational materials on reducing environmental impact by lowering utility usage. This role is what was lost in the organizational shuffle and, as the environmental ethic was no longer on the corporate agenda, this was the role only being paid "lip service." Now, her role in rationalizing increasing utility rates had fanned her longstanding sense of value conflict with the company:

> *There is still a real need to do information and education around the prices and the rates so people understand what they're being charged for, but I have a problem with how it all works; I don't agree with what it is.*

Kate's ethical framework put the public good, not the corporate good, foremost:

> *Now with the government deregulating the whole [utility] industry, there is a lot of politics happening there, and I just don't want to be part of any of that. I guess that I feel somehow, in some ways, that this basic service is being manipulated. . . . Who will get this bigger share of the pot? . . . I guess the politics does bother me from an ethical point of view, just the fact that there are these big companies lobbying the government and what 'connections' are making these decisions happen.*

As she described it, the "connections" meant that large industry received preferential rates that the average householder did not, through the complicity of the government regulating boards. For her, this was a violation of ethics in which the public interest was not being served. In an entrenched system that did not value her desire to work hard and do her best for the company's overall goals, Kate was now struggling with ethics of her job as well.

There are several facets to Kate's disillusionment. She was disillusioned around the lack of mutuality between employer and employee. The "deal" should be that the company provides the structure necessary for its employees to make a contribution and to subsequently recognize the efforts. The employees in return work hard, fully dedicated to the mandate, above and beyond the actual job requirements. She now said that being fully dedicated to the mandate meant that you needed to close your eyes to ethical issues and the "human aspect." It meant you work for free when you needed to, and it meant you do whatever work you were given no matter its relation to your training or values.

The other illusion that was breaking down was the empowerment and autonomy that she had previously experienced. For instance, she was recently part of a team who was designing a special plan for the CEO. Then the Chairman's office "yanked the work" from them.

> *Okay, is that what this [reorganization] means then, in terms of even empowerment? . . . I've seen a big change there, I think, in terms of how much autonomy and all that kind of stuff we have, and so why is that?*

Again, Kate was seeing the disparities between the rhetoric of employee empowerment and professional responsibility and the practice of centralized power.

Unable to function well under these circumstances, Kate took a month of stress leave and since that time had been embracing the question of whether to quit her job. On one hand, she did not see herself as the primary "breadwinner" and therefore saw herself as having choice. On the other hand, she also saw that it is part of the "whole midlife thing" in which "you reach that point in your life where you start to question, right? . . . I think everyone probably goes through that, and it's just different for different people." Let us hold this question of the relationship between disillusionment and the "midlife thing" as we consider the questions surfacing for Sally, who financially did not have these choices.

Sally

Sally would have loved to quit her job because she considered herself burned out. The difference from Kate's story is that Sally needed to keep working for financial reasons. Therefore, she limped along with a life-threatening health condition that required weekly hospital treatments. The other difference from Kate was her position in the work hierarchy. A teaching assistant for special needs preschoolers, Sally rarely received recognition for her work, and little autonomy was expected of her position at the "bottom" of the hierarchy:

> *I certainly see. . . the pecking order. . . at my worksite in the school system. You have principalships, and you have assistant principals, and then you've got your teachers, and then you've got your speech and language pathologists—and oftentimes WE are the ones that are working with the children who are so needy in all aspects of their lives, and WE are the ones that are working one-on-one with them, and we seem to be passed over as—I don't know—such underlings.*

She was very distressed by the hierarchy that grants CEOs "the bucks that they're making, whereas the people who are doing some of the most important jobs in the society are, yes, completely overlooked."

> *I think I often remind myself that, in the scheme of things, I might be the lowest paid, but I think I'm the closest to those that need me the most than the rest of the [credentialled professionals] are. [The students] are just little children, they're so vulnerable, . . . ittle children with their disabilities and those who have suffered such physical and mental abuses by their parents.*

Sally was keenly aware of her powerless position in the "pecking order" and that she lacked the control necessary to effectively address the needs of children. She rationalized that at least she was closest to the need, and yet her helplessness to meet this need created substantial frustration. Her critique was that the system does not recognize or value those who do some of the most vital work in society—including caring for broken little children. At times she was beholden to the classroom teacher, but at other times she also saw that the hands of classroom teachers are tied—to the point of witnessing a nervous breakdown of one teacher with whom she worked:

> *In that kindergarten classroom the powers-that-be, whoever they are, decided that a little boy who suffers from a disorder called RAD—Reactive Attachment Disorder—and it's serious business—[should be in this class]. This is a child who at the age of five has been abandoned by his mother, very violent, very erratic. . . . It didn't seem to matter what it was that she wanted for the entire class. [It] was*

> *just simply, "Here's this child." The powers-that-be say he belongs here, and that's where he went. She ended up taking a month off work. The stress was just so unbelievable!*

Such decisions are made by absentee education officials who are not aware of the impact of their decisions that jeopardize students and teacher. The powerlessness of watching the damage done on a daily basis eroded her hope. Only once did she have an experience of influencing "the powers-that-be," and this was what she knew that she was capable of contributing:

> *I cannot effect any action at these meetings that are meant for parents to choose the goals for their children to work on. These goals are set by the parents in conjunction with the speech language pathologists, the teachers, the occupational therapist, and the physiotherapist. . . . It gives me a sense of purpose if, through meaningful negotiations, I can right a wrong. I get a thrill in sitting in a meeting where I can effect a positive action through using my words, that the use of my words will cause the "powers that be" to "provide extra domestic help" for a mother with seven children—one of which is severely disabled—and to shame the "powers that be" for expecting the oldest sibling (12-year-old girl) to provide that extra domestic work. My God, she's still a child! (underlining in original)*

Sally's distress centred around her invisibility to those higher on the ladder, and hence her voicelessness. As a "frontline worker" she felt that she had much to say given her intimate contact with the children she was assistant-teaching, yet there was no structure that facilitated her input into decision making. "[I] don't have the power to be able to say, 'Listen, this child needs a [diaper] change' and to take that child out of the classroom, change him or her, and come back in." As well, absentee decision makers were deciding the conditions under which they all worked and learned, to the physical and emotional detriment of all involved. She concluded, "I think that [further] education is still the way I need to go" to give power and presence to her voice. Her desire was for the legitimacy to "effect change in or for others," and the only route that she believed would provide her voice with legitimacy was to receive credentials.

For Sally, disillusionment was comprised of lack of control to make a significant impact in her work environment, lack of legitimacy to voice her concerns, lack of recognition given to the work that she lovingly and conscientiously contributed daily, and lack of pay to support her own teenaged family in light of her husband's seasonal work. She said that she was filled with "anger, negativity, envy, and low self-esteem"; she was burned out.

Webster's (1979) defined *burnout* as a situation in which "a tool or instrument is worn out by excessive or improper use so that its usefulness is exhausted and it ceases to operate" (147). This was how Sally felt: used as an instrument until her usefulness expired; in this case, until her health finally gave out. Similarly, her intelligence, abilities, and experience were "improperly used" simply by virtue of her rank, not her abilities. Without the certification to verify the possibilities for "expanding her usefulness," she was relegated to invisibility and silence. From this "ab-use," her body ceased to operate so that she now required weekly blood transfusions to keep her alive, and her diet was severely limited given that her digestive tract was almost nonfunctional. She directly attributed these conditions to burnout.

Burnout, as explained by Fr. L. Savary (1978), is the result of working against insurmountable odds for years at home and at work and not receiving the recognition, rewards, support, or gratitude that are commensurate with the energy and caring expended. He asserted that even when people see that what they are doing is vital and important, they reach a state of hopelessness, seeing that this sense of importance is not shared and that they do not have the capacity to make a difference. The anger and bitterness can build up in the face of organizational inertia, and the loneliness can be overwhelming. He observed that one feels discouraged, drained, energy-less, and sometimes destructive of self or others. Keeping one's spirit alive is the key issue in burnout, for it channels the energy into the body to keep it healthy and into the mind to keep it active. When this energy is blocked or constricted in the condition of burnout, the body and mind can no longer continue giving or being productive. Although Sally was not a tool, she had been used as a tool over long periods of time in less than optimal conditions. With her frustrations with her workload at home and her financial worries, she described herself as the "sacrificial lamb whose body is on the cross by giving, giving, giving yourself up" to long hours of work and exhausting toil with little recognition or support.

For Anne, Kate, and Sally, "doing a good job" was a horizon of significance that was intimately connected to their identity. Each of these individuals had invested a large part of themselves in their work. They saw their work contributing to a vision of a society that provides high-quality basic services to its citizens, through either the public or the private sector. No matter what their education, income, or status, each of these individuals saw their work as an extension of their personal qualities in service of others. Yet, disillusionment and a lack of power characterized all levels of the work hierarchy from assistant to professional to management. The contradiction between the professional obligations and associated ideals that they had internalized with the reality of neither being able to perform these obligations to the best of their abilities nor seeing the organizations function according to these ideals was such that each person felt torn apart from the pressure. They each felt silenced and either rendered invisible or made themselves invisible. Each of them knew that she was facing a decision of whether to quit her job.

The difficulty in giving up on the system meant abandoning those for whom they care—both those they serve and the colleagues with whom they serve. Implicit in this decision would also be the abandonment of the notion of a liberal welfare state that provides essential services in the public interest. However, the highly bureaucratic nature of how these services are provided has eroded the capacity of these talented and conscientious people from doing what they defined as a good job. None of them could settle for less—not for cynicism, for political expediency, or for financial pragmatism. Yet, the personal cost for not settling was high in terms of physical and emotional health as each of these people turned the disillusionment inwards into self-doubt, guilt, soul searching, low self-esteem, and poor health.

In the larger social context of neo-liberal policies, Anne, Kate, and Sally have felt that the politics of power, the business of money, and the hierarchies of status are tightly interwoven. They concurred that the quality of primary human services are under threat—whether in health, public utilities, or education. Each person clearly linked her inability to do a good job to what she considered to be a violation of her personal principles at an organizational level. From their varying positions, Anne and Kate saw the dynamics of decision making, and they clearly did not want to feel like accomplices to decisions that violated their own ethics. Sally would have liked to be party to decisions that could enact her principles. In the stories that follow, the personal cost for taking action in the face of unethical practices is high, another passageway in the labyrinth of disillusionment.

Disillusionment as Violation of Ethics

Ky and Garth

Ky left her full-time teaching position to raise her own children. As they grew, she worked part-time as a substitute teacher. During this time she was deciding whether to return full-time to the classroom. From these experiences, particularly with increasing class sizes, she chose not to return. For her, teaching thirty seven-year-olds is "set up to lose":

> *I just don't think you can really have a strong rapport when you have those big numbers. When I was teaching I wondered, Did I talk to each of those kids? Did I even look at them? You spend so much time on the kids with hyperactive problems and the attention deficit problems. . . . The thought of going back to a classroom, it just gives me knots in my stomach. . . . I saw the big classes, . . . all the tired people, . . . the kids that have been lost.*

After deciding not to go back to the classroom, Ky received a lesson in decision-making power when she worked for a local school board office. She loved the work because she could work directly with parents and children on a one-to-one basis, including children who had been in violent, abusive situations in the school environment or children whose academic pursuits were a story of failure. Despite these rewarding circumstances, she experienced serious ethical issues in this new worksite. It became clear to her that the decisions made and the final destinations of funds reflected political priorities rather than educational priorities—which represented dishonesty and even theft to her. Although she would not have named these as ethical issues at the time, she now said that she witnessed her "fundamental principles being violated":

> *Education is becoming more privatized and marketized by who can attract the most people. Therefore there are many ethical compromises boards are making to attract people. . . . The funding is there, but they manipulate it as much as [they] can, [they] promise people a lot but then say that are prevented from [doing that]. [There is] lots of under-the-table stuff such as how they categorize kids to get special funding—[that] was a huge eye opener. As an employee . . . we tried to track where the money went and how come this child never got a full-time aide, but we were told we are out of line and that budgeting is not our concern and we should just work with our workload. So [the funds] disappear into a black hole.*

Her disappointment grew as the people she knew, who were the policymakers and from whom she expected ethical practice, saw this "redirecting" of funds neither as dishonesty nor as violating the rights of the children in their trust. The hidden nature of this manipulation behind policies and procedures and the reward to these persons for their efficiency stoked her feelings of violation. Slowly she realized that she felt "ethically imbalanced with the philosophy of this organization." She avoided "the hierarchy" and tried to concentrate on meeting children's direct needs, but her disillusionment grew.

Ky's husband, Garth, worked in the stressful area of human resources, first in the civil service and then in a large private corporation. He worked to implement policies and practices that were fair and just for personnel as well as for the organization. Yet, too often the organizations saw only the financial bottom line. Against his advice (supported with relevant documentation), civic managers often unceremoniously fired staff and did not provide adequate remuneration or transitional training. He advised them about the risks of lowered morale by dealing in bad faith as well as potential lawsuits. When he was fired because of these values, "I just shut up and walked out, cleaned out my office and went home." Given the intense anger, he did not waste much time and began pouring his energies into a new corporate job, rather than fight the injustice. Yet, the treadmill of 16-hour days and an overwhelming workload began to take their toll. A year later he said, "You know, I can't do this any more. I was just burned out":

> *I didn't like the company; . . . it just contradicted my fundamental values, and the deeper I got into it the worse it got. . . . What that means is that I believe that people are your best asset. I believe that if you treat them with integrity and respect, you know, they will respond in kind. I believe in if there are issues, you deal with them, but you deal with them on a one-to-one basis. What most companies do is, if something's wrong, they write a policy. You know the standard joke is if you want to see an organization's list of mistakes, look at the index of their policy manual. . . . I explained to them, it is okay to sit down with people and say, "This isn't working out; . . . how can we end this relationship that's mutually advantageous to us?' . . . They gave that lip service, but when it came to actually doing it, they wouldn't do it.*

Ky knew that Garth was not able to do the human resources function and treat people in the ethical way he needed to. Ky said that "the light was going out of his eyes."

> *He just could not come home and say "I had a good day" when he had to call someone into his office and say "You need to tell me in twenty minutes whether you are going to be here tomorrow and get all your things." He just could not work that way.*

As the disillusionment grew, she said, "You know, you just tolerate it." However, their toleration had reached the breaking point. They both began to realize the large impact of these ethical compromises in terms of their health, family life, and self-esteem.

Many of their discussions at home centred around the value of climbing the career ladder to a "management position" and the "price they had to pay" for this status and income. They realized that it was no longer possible for Garth to work such long hours under such pressure:

> *I mean, it wasn't much of a choice. It was either quit or just go off the deep end. It was affecting his health and his outlook on life. It affected who he was. Part of him is having time with his family and he couldn't do it any more.*

Unable to carry on and despite the financial anxiety, Garth said, "There was one particular case that really made up my mind. . . . So a couple of weeks later I just submitted my resignation and I said, 'You know, I'm sorry, I'm tired.'"

Together, their experiences both in the public service and in the private corporate world added up to the conclusion that

> *big organizations own your soul. . . . We do really [see] when you work for such a large organization for such a large period of time, they own you, and when times get tough, they own you more and everybody is just holding onto their job for that security. . . . [We see] very many people who we know are not really happy in what they're doing. They're counting, . . . I can take early retirement at fifty-three; it's only another ten years.*

What does it meant to have a company or organization "own your soul"? In a Christian understanding, the soul is considered to be the essence of an individual, including the moral force that animates the person. In a Platonic understanding, the soul has three aspects: one's reason or calculating ability, one's spirit, and one's desires or appetites. This has led to an integrated fourth understanding in which the soul is "the total self" and is manifested in the mind, body, and spirit. To own something is to possess it as property and hold the power over its use. Therefore, to have an organization own your soul is, first, to see your soul as property that can be sold or given away. Second, it is to have the organization hold the power over how your essence and moral force will be utilized or suppressed. It is to have an organization rule your reasoning, your spirit, and your desires. To not have your soul owned is to be '"on your own," where you are "for yourself" or, should you so choose, "for the world."

Interestingly, if many of Ky and Garth's friends were similarly "owned" and therefore "counting," they were essentially waiting to "get their soul back." As they described it, one exchanges one's soul for security, another trade-off in adult life, as Kate so aptly coined it. In other words, people "give up" their life force and ethical efficacy to their employers in order to be paid. They dedicate their intelligence, their spirit, and their desires toward a goal that is not their own and may indeed violate their own principles for living. The needs of the soul are forfeited for good pay, some recognition, and limited autonomy, if that.

Clifford Williams (1994) called this the divided soul, in which

> *we live outside ourselves, we identify with some group—the 'crowd' as Kierkegaard puts it—and lose ourselves in it. We become oblivious to ourselves, forgetting that we are a distinct person. This oblivion is not the self-forgetfulness of unselfish caring; it is the oblivion of lost identity. We become absorbed in the other, losing consciousness of our individuality. The beliefs and desires that we think are ours really belong to the group. Here the dividedness consists of being something different from what we appear to be. We appear to be individuals who have their own internal substance, but we are really "group persons" with hollow insides. (44)*

This notion of a divided soul flies in the face of the individualism rhetoric that shapes our culture, for while individuals seek to be their own person in their nonwork hours, they conform to the work culture in which they find themselves. Seeing this, neither Ky nor Garth could continue "being owned," to merge their identities with organizations whose ethics differed so fundamentally from their own. The sense of powerlessness and violation was too great. When they acted on their ethical urgings by asking questions and raising alternatives, Ky was silenced and Garth was fired.

> *And it doesn't take long that you can get very stilted in the big world and very disillusioned. . . . [It is] so good to see that [other] people [in this class] still have dreams and goals and values that are similar to mine, that people are important and life is important and money isn't always the driving force, because I work in both health and education wher, . . . no matter how wonderful people are or how good a program is, it's just slash and burn!*

Ky and Garth saw the arbritariness of big systems that have little conscience regarding either people or programs in an era of efficiency. Like Kate, seeing no mutuality, they both left the organizations for which they were working immediately prior to coming to the course. Their journey was a significant one as they struggled to understand what work could mean outside of "being owned."

Disillusionment with the Importance of Work and Material Things

Jennifer

In the past four years, Jennifer's job as a health inspector has gone from a job she loved to a job she hated, leaving her questioning the role of work in her life. Four years ago, she felt that her work was important and appreciated, and she had no trouble convincing people of changes that needed to be made to protect public health. Her first boss "instilled incredible self-esteem" by always publicly supporting her decisions, and there "was enough time to plan and reflect and to spend the time I needed to do a good job":

> *What really drew me to this work is caring about people and trying to protect what we define as public health. In the broadest definition of my work—safe food, safe water, prevention of disease—[it is a way to live out my primary values].*

With the regionalization of the health system, her position was tossed around before one office would take responsibility for it. She now had a sense of insecurity about the importance of her work and the longevity of the position. The internal support was also withdrawn from Jennifer's job through a change in management. Simultaneously, the public authority of her position was undermined when she was told to ignore legislation that she normally would have enforced and her judgement was questioned because of political interests:

> *Now [we are] told not to cause flak politically, . . . [or we] are told that we can't enforce that piece of legislation for whatever reason; . . . it goes against my ethical judgement. . . . I believe in what I'm enforcing, so that could become a dilemma. . . . We had board members who told people to ignore our orders, and they have no authority to do that.*

She now questioned her effectiveness to carry out the duties of her position. Jennifer experienced the decline from feeling the support and security needed to make unpopular decisions in the interests of public health to a feeling of being under siege. Politics had now put a substantial encumbrance on her ability to do her job in an unbiased way. The expected neutrality of the public sector to enforce legislation designed to protect the public has been evaporating in the face of backroom or boardroom politics.

This shift has had a profound impact on her daily life, draining her energy and permeating the rest of her life with questions around the importance that she gave to her job. Jennifer's despair was palpable, to the point where she became fatalistic:

> *I really have to reach some days to feel that sense that I'm actually making a difference. I can't find it within myself most days. . . . If we lose it [my job], we lose it. . . . Why am I so tied up in this job? . . . I don't want [my job] to be THAT important. I don't want to be lying on my deathbed with somebody saying, "She was a really good worker." . . . I sort of like to think that I have something better to contribute [to society] than what I've done so far!*

Jennifer was annoyed that her job had merged with her identity to such an extent that she allowed it to take precedence over all aspects of her life. Once, she was proud of her title and role. It used to be her primary form of self-expression and object of her allegiance. Because of this, she knew that she let her job take central place in her life. She now talked about developing other parts of her self through which she could conceivably make the contribution she yearned to make but could no longer through her profession. She sensed that she had a calling; that she had something "better to contribute." But it was hard for her to see beyond expressing it through her job.

Equating being a good worker with being a moral person has been a central tenet of the Protestant ethic. Protestantism, explained Max Weber (1930) regards work as duty to one's calling where one's proficiency is exemplary of their virtue as a person. The idea of faithful labour as highly pleasing to God and labour as a calling is characteristic of modern work (54, 178-179). Given this equation, Dominquez and Robin (1992) suggested, "Our jobs have replaced family, neighbourhood, civic affairs, church and even mates as our primary allegiance, our primary source of love, and site of self-expression" (5). Under these conditions, when the ability to express one's calling is blocked and one's ability to be effective and proficient is constrained, the questions around the importance of work surface.

The question, Jennifer said, is whether or not she can learn to "shut the door on her job at the end of the day," or "put work in its place," as Bruce O'Hara (1988) called it. Since the advent of the industrial economy, people now work twice the hours that nomadic or agricultural people did historically. This leaves substantially less space for the web of leisurely communal activities that include religion, celebration, creative self-expression, and nurturing the young, old, and sick (Dominguez & Robin, 1992; O'Hara, 1988). With industrialism, an ethic was made out of hard and long hours of work as well as the professionalization and commodification of these communal activities (Illich, 1977). As professionalization has occurred, many people find it difficult to free themselves psychologically from these industrial values. Jennifer still hoped that enough changes might happen that she could return to finding her fulfillment and sense of authenticity through her work. For now, the reality was that Jennifer had little energy or time left over at the end of the work day for volunteer activities through which she could find an alternative source of fulfillment.

Dan

In contrast, Dan took a utilitarian approach to his work as a commercial cook. His job was the means to provide the white picket fence image of family, not the full source of meaning on its own. For him, his work was a job, not a profession. It was important to him that he clearly demarcated where his job ended and where the rest of his life began:

> *It's, I'm here to do a job, I do the job, I go home. So the two are separate. . . . When I go home at the end of the night I am finished with work. I don't take work home with me; it is totally separate. Maybe this will make it easier for you to understand: The work I do now, you could plop me into any setting . . . and I could still do the work; that wouldn't change.*

He considered his job in very instrumental terms in which he filled a specific job function that anyone could fill or one which could be performed in any similar work site. He did not expect his work to provide the expression of his full self, but to be a financial means to express himself in other aspects of his life. This utilitarian view corresponds to the ethos of the market system, in which individuals assess their profits and losses in terms of choosing a certain line of work in light of the return for *x* number of hours expended daily:

> *[The purpose of work] is to provide the means by which you can do those things that are—this is two parts—to provide you with the means to do the things that you want to do, be that boat building, pottery, whatever; and also work should be in some way fulfilling in and of itself in that it should challenge you and it should make you to some degree happy. You don't have to love your job, but you should like your job.*

He had stayed at this workplace for many years because of "a sense of family from the people that I work with; I've been with them for a long time, and that would make it harder to leave than the work." He also received a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment from his work but felt monotony as the challenge was never expanded. Dan made a distinction between finding some basic enjoyment, camaraderie, and fulfillment in a job well done, but he centred most of his means of fulfillment on his home and leisure life.

Dan's struggle centred on measuring his life against monetary and material success and what he could be making for the hours he was spending at work. As he explained in the introduction. he was not making what he was "worth" and therefore felt that he was not fulfilling his full potential *vis-à-vis* the material possessions that he could have been acquiring. The roots of the white picket fence image emanate from Christian asceticism, in which the ideal of the middle-class home is one of "sober simplicity, . . . the clean and solid comfort of the middle-class home" (Weber, 1930: 171). This image and the associated principles of honesty, integrity, and loyalty fly in the face of today's acquisitive ethic in which one's success is measured by income and number of possessions.

> *The hard part is, in North American culture you get bombarded with—your self-worth is based on how much you make. And I've just about had enough of that; I'm ready to throw that up. . . . In Western civilization it's go, go, go, push. push, push. . . . I think I'm entering the Japanese portion of my life where less is better. . . . This North American culture of buy, buy, buy, have, have, have, get, get, get, is not in the end leading me to be happy. . . . So it's this theory that the more things you own, the more they own you. . . . I want to simplify, simplify, simplify.*

Work for Dan had been a means to the material life, but his conclusion was that "I had that," and it did not equate with happiness or even satisfactory societal status. Rather, it led to a vicious cycle of repair and maintenance and debt. He looked to Zen as a way to find fulfillment in simplicity. It was not his workplace that "owned" him; it was the material things that "own you," and he felt fragmented by the number of things demanding his attention. Thus, rather than the material things being the property, he saw himself as property that had been enslaved to the desires for material things:

> *I'm starting to get over that, the "When I have the new car, I'll be happy. When I go on vacation, I'll be happy. When I have the house clean, I'll be happy." . . . No, when you have those things, you have those things. . . . In a lot of ways, I think that those are external happinesses, and what I really want is internal happiness. [Maybe that is] "spiritual"; . . . it's like there's part of me . . . that's missing.*

This is a fundamental contradiction present within the Protestant ethic in which one works with great industry and lives with frugality but is chastised for the possessions produced out of this union. Max Weber (1930) explained:

> *The idea of a man's duty to his possessions, to which he subordinates himself as an obedient steward, . . . bears with chilling weight on his life. The greater the possessions the heavier . . . the feeling of responsibility of them, for holding them undiminished for the glory of God. (170)*

The equation with which Dan struggled was whether material success ought to equal being a good and happy person. It appears to contradict what is necessary for a spiritual life that exudes inner contentment through outer simplicity:

> *My brain is starting to work to that idea that I'm probably going to lose the house, and after the separation, for the first year, that killed me. Because you have to remember, when I was eighteen, the house with the picket fence was THE picture. So to lose that was destroying me. But I've come to the conclusion that a house is a house, a roof is a roof, and that those aren't the things that are really important. The things that are really important are your family and your health. . . . A new car does not make you a good person. . . . Because I drive an old car does not make me a bad person; it makes me a good person driving an old car. That's what it is. Don't equate your worth with what you have.*

Fromm (1976) identified this struggle as the struggle between the "having" and "being" modes of existence that characterize modern society. He considered these as the two primary "orientations toward self and the world whose respective dominance determines the totality of how a person thinks, feels, and acts" (24). The having orientation is the desire to have and have more of. Almost anything can be possessed if a person is oriented to a having mode, from material things to people to knowledge to status. Fundamentally, one "uses an external object in order to exist, in order to be oneself" (Fromm, 1989: ix).

In most religious and wisdom traditions, liberation from greed, illusions, and hate, as well as the attainment of love and compassion are considered the conditions for the art of full living. Fromm (1989) suggested that the concept of liberation has been narrowed and distorted in modern society to consist of liberation from outside forces such as various political-economic systems. What is lacking is the corresponding inner liberation from dependency on the having orientation, which is self-destructive as well as destructive of society. But Fromm did not equate the "being" orientation with the 'not-having" orientation which would be the asceticism implicit in the Protestant ethic. Rather, it is a form of self-reliance in which one exercises love, reason, and productive activity in a way that is shared and used, not used up.

Dan discussed the suggestive power of the media which creates and intensifies the desire to have. Just as Dan was breaking through the illusion that possessions do not equate with human worth, similarly Fromm (1989) emphasized that one cannot be liberated without "breaking through the property structure of one's existence" (117). As Dan expressed it, it is seeing what is not working right or is missing in terms of one's inner spirituality. In Fromm's terms, it is learning to "widen one's state of consciousness . . . and achieve a higher degree of non-attachment, of non-greed, and of non-illusion" (33, 50).

Interestingly, as many individuals expressed and Fromm (1956) reiterated, the accumulation is not just material; it can also be relational. Many of the participants referred to "getting" spouses and children along with the house and car. Without intending to do so, even the most intimate relationships are treated as part of the accumulation process. Fromm considered this as no surprise, for

> *in a culture in which the marketing orientation prevails, and in which material success is the outstanding value, there is little reason to be surprised that human love relations follow the same pattern of exchange which governs the commodity and the labor market. . . . [So] two persons thus fall in love when they feel that they have found the best object available on the market, considering the limitations of their own exchange values, ...[so that it is] a mutually favorable exchange. (3-4)*

Perhaps this analysis appears crass, for we prefer to think of romantic and parental love as untainted by the base motivators that lubricate the economic system in which we need to survive. Yet, whether we realize it or not, the having mode of thought dominant in our economic system has invaded many parts of our lives.

Natalie talked about her disillusionment with marriage. She expected her marriage to be one filled with the mutuality of loving and being loved. This expectation was crushed when it was laid bare for the monetary and material motivation behind it.

> *When my Mom died, [my husband] didn't bother to come home [from Saudi Arabia]. So just realizing, Where were these priorities that we had? Why is he out there? I wasn't raised that money was the end-all, the be-all. My family was [the end-all]. . . . I thought it was just for a short term to give us a boost and him to go to university. But that truly wasn't the case. . . . Everything came to a head the following year, saying, "What are we doing here? Why are we doing this?" [My marriage] wasn't a beneficial experience other than realizing that all these material things really didn't offer anything to the quality of my life.*

Even in people's most intimate relationships the monetary bottom line sometimes takes precedence, and having a spouse and children is part of the accumulation process sanctioned by cultural conventions. But this is not the only part of our society that has been invaded by economic motivators; so has our public life.

Disillusionment with Public Life

Anne and Jennifer explained succinctly how the dynamics of politics and business permeated their professions which were originally predicated on serving the public good. Similarly, the participants expanded the critique by expressing their disillusionment with political priorities, the political process, and the hypocrisy of institutions dedicated to the social good.

What Can One Person Do? Futility in the Face of Complexity

Jennifer, like all the participants, felt responsible as a citizen to take action on issues of concern. Together, the participants listed a wide range of concerns from poverty to environmental degradation to societal loss of morals and ethics to instabilities in international political and economic systems. Despite the view that they were individually responsible as citizens, the participants felt powerless individually. Jennifer explained:

> *What do I do as one person? I think we all have a responsibility for some of it, but it's like we need to get a large enough voice of those of us who vote to be able to say that we don't like some of what's going on. . . . I'm starting to wonder about what else I can do. Some of it at work we do, and at home we do certain things. We're into recycling, and we're into composting, but those are pretty typical things. I'm sort of at a point where I'm trying to figure out what else I can do? . . . It's just starting to really niggle into my consciousness about what I should be doing.*

Jennifer's view was that the social and environmental issues faced by our society are as much her responsibility as the responsibility of political leaders and the civil service. This view was shared by most of the participants. They all indicated that the criterion of a worthy action is that it have a concrete impact and not be just a symbolic action. Jennifer strove to be environmentally responsible in her household habits from the safe disposal of toxins to recycling and composting, but she did not see that this made any kind of substantive impact on the roots of a large and complex issue.

Kate also expressed a sense of futility regarding the impact of personal changes, when what is needed is a broad level of social change:

> *I guess, this is sort of a contradiction, but I feel that it is everyone's concern. Yet on the other hand I have just said that there is nothing I can do. I guess there are lifestyle choices that I can make and that kind of thing, . . . but I don't feel it will be a very big impact. With environmental issues, I can do the recycle thing and be more conscious when purchasing products. But I think what discourages me is, I can see myself doing all that, but then I see the bigger picture kind of things, which totally devalues anything that [I] can do.*

Although the participants were not often able to detail what bigger-picture kinds of changes needed to happen, there was an awareness that this level of change is required for significant change.

Natalie drew a direct connection between the global economy on her job and her sense of personal security. She explained that these large forces exempted her as an individual, given the futility of personal action:

> *The global economy . . . seems so up and down, and it could fall through the bottom in a minute. . . . So no matter how much I feel secure in my job or my personal life, always it could change in a second. . . . I think it's everybody's [responsibility], but I feel, I guess, a weighted responsibility on me [to be] very minimal. . . . Yes, I think I would [like to contribute], but I don't see how my little self could make such an impact on these big issues*

Similarly, Jennifer explained the inner dialogue that she had about the urgency of various societal issues:

> *[What] we've been talking about is scary in a way. You know, like the future and what may happen if we don't make some significant changes very soon and those kinds of things. And then that whole guilt complex kicks in again and it's like, oh, I got to do something. And then it's like, well, what can one person do? And then it's like, wait a minute, don't talk like that.*

The participants were stranded between feeling individually responsible and feeling the futility of individual action. Anne resolved this by seeing the additive impact of individuals rather than by accepting futility or blaming big systems:

> *I think it is really important to remember that you maybe can't change the whole world yourself, but you and thousands like you trying to do your best can. I don't think I ever say, "Oh, I can't do anything because it's someone else's fault." I always try to say, "If this bothers me, what can I do?" And if I end up saying "Nothing," then I have to work on not letting it bother me.*

Many participants rejected the blaming of corporate or public systems for social or environmental issues. Like Anne, they suggested that if corporate or public systems are contributing to a problem, the responsibility lays with citizens to educate themselves and hold these systems accountable. As Anne said, if you choose to say nothing or do nothing, then don't complain. Gena agreed with this viewpoint by suggesting that social change happens through the accumulation of personal change—if each person takes responsibility for changing themselves. Further, she said that if people wish to criticize institutions and accuse them of manipulating the system for their own interests, then people are assuming a victim position of blaming and refusing empowerment. "We talk about them (corporations and such) against us, which is limiting language and an expression of power/lack of power. I don't see enough credit begin given to [individual] humans and our capabilities."

Jennifer took a different perspective by advocating that group pressure is the way to social change. She emphasized that one person must add their voice to the voices of others to create a voter block significant enough that policymakers would consider their views. Therefore, although the responsibility may lie with each citizen, she suggested that citizens need to join with like-minded people to make an impact on the political process. The task, she thought, is to find enough like-minded people.

In sum, the participants genuinely wanted to take action on important social issues, but they felt overwhelmed by hidden information and the complexity of forces moving in another direction. Often, they had little idea of what to do as citizens that might make a substantive impact, beyond individual responsibility for basic consumption and disposal issues at a household level.

Impact Through Work and Volunteerism

Many participants considered their greatest contribution to these matters as that which happened through their daily work. Jennifer saw that she made a contribution to some of these issues through the educational component of her work. However, she admitted that she did not "make much effort to become educated about some of this stuff until it really impact[s] me [in my work]." Volunteering as a way to make a citizen contribution was an option for Jennifer only now that the educational component of her job had been eliminated. Realistically, the possibility of volunteering was doubtful at the moment given the overwhelming workload.

Natalie also expressed the general feeling that "I would like to do more volunteering work. . . . With my health, I make a decent salary; why can't I contribute more for those people who aren't given those opportunities, weren't blessed with the same health?" Yet, she worked at least 10 hours a day at her government job and was reluctant to volunteer when her time was so limited and her ability to meet commitments minimal. Even though Dan did not work these long hours, with a busy family life as a single parent he said, "I'm so insular. . . . I'm so centered on my little piece of the world that I don't have any energy left to [get involved in larger issues]." As many of the participants have described, they are so overworked and stressed that even though they desire to be involved as a volunteer in the community or in political organizations, they simply don't have the time or energy.

There are circumstances when volunteering is possible and welcomed. When Ky was working at home with her children full-time, she become involved in a local environmental group. From this experience, she cultivated an even stronger desire to address the disposal issues of a consumptive society. However, she also gained a more realistic assessment of how difficult it is to address environmental issues as a local action group:

> *We were part of an environmental group at one time. But again the markets dropped; you could have tons of plastic containers and all of a sudden there was no market for plastic. And tin was bad for that too; the market goes up and down. Even paper was very hard to get rid of at one time. There is so little money put into what we can use these products for.*

Ky considered herself as good an environmental citizen as possible from within the standard middle-class lifestyle. She attempted to live out her belief in citizen involvement by joining an action group that combined their energies toward a worthy goal. Yet, there was real weariness in her voice as she talked about the lack of impact by a small group working against large market forces going in the opposite direction. Her disillusionment increased as she saw how difficult it was to shift the consumptive system without appropriate research and innovation. Again, personal and even small-group action seems dwarfed by complexity of the system. Eventually the group folded.

SUMMARY OF DISILLUSIONMENT

To make a difference is to sense that one's presence in the world has mattered. For most of the participants, their disillusionment centered around not being able to make a difference, whether that is the ability to do a good job, act out their ethics at an organizational level, or be involved as citizens. They were unable to see the impact of their creative and responsible actions. Anne, as a health care professional, was disillusioned by her inability to enact the principles behind her vision for a health care system that was empowering, principles she thought were shared by the system in which she worked. Kate was disillusioned by the redefinition of her job to technical tasks that she found meaningless and to the corporate pursuit of profits that undermined her ethical drive to be of assistance to the common good. Sally was disillusioned by her lack of power and autonomy to do the "right thing" for the young children in her care and to influence policies that could improve the conditions in which they learn and live. Ky and Garth were disillusioned by the need to "sell their soul" or give up their ethical voice in order to keep a job in a large organization. Jennifer was disillusioned by the loss of job conditions that made an important social contribution and provided a sense of identity and fulfillment. Dan was disillusioned by the emptiness of the material life and false equation between material success, personal goodness, and fulfilling family life.

All of the participants were disillusioned by the inability to make a difference as a citizen. Individual action was dwarfed and appeared futile against the larger forces that are changing the social, economic, and natural environment in which we exist. They all felt a deep responsibility for various ethical, social, and environmental issues, but felt blocked to impact them in any significant way. Although many of them would have liked to be more involved in volunteerism and make a difference in this way, most of them were too busy at work and at home to be able to commit their time and energies.

All of the participants saw their lives as guided by high ideals and strong ethics for the social good. This was their moral horizon through which they yearned to make a difference in the world. Nevertheless, in their work environments, in shared public life, and in their home lives, they most often felt powerless to enact these ideals and ethics and therefore to make a difference. This generated disillusionment, particularly with the realization that these elements of what ought to characterize a good individual and a good society did not appear to be shared by those around them who were operating on opposing ethics. Chapter Nine goes beyond a midlife crisis explanation of disillusionment to examine more deeply the conflicting ethics that produce socially shared disillusionment.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THREADING THE LABYRINTH:
FRAGMENTATION AND INTUITIONS OF WHOLENESS

> *The press of busyness is like a charm. It is sad to observe how its power swells, how it reaches out seeking always to lay hold of ever-younger victims so that childhood or youth are scarcely allowed the quiet and the retirement in which the Eternal may unfold a divine growth. (Kierkegaard, 1956; as cited in Williams, 1994: 60)*

INTRODUCTION: BALANCE BETWEEN LIFEWORLDS

Alongside the desire to make a difference and the experience of disillusionment was the overwhelming desire among the participants for balance. This was a significant passageway in the labyrinth of adult life expressed in the first interview and which proved to be a major pedagogical entry point. The notion of balance held various meanings for the participants, all pointing to the experience of fragmentation.

For Dan, balance was making sense of the seven people he was trying to be:

> *If I don't find balance, I will not make it. . . . I cannot be seven people. And when I try to be seven people, none of them get done well. All the time I feel pulled. . . . There should be a balance between the energy you expend between work, your family life, your friends, your romantic life.*

Along with his Zen desires for simplicity, Dan hoped that with balance would come a sense of inner peace and harmony. Anne also understood balance as needing adequate time for work, family, and self. She had a heavy workload, but she tried to set aside quality time to be with her husband and with each of her three daughters. It is a constant struggle, and she was growing weary: "I also know that I'm getting older and I get tired. . . . I struggle with that balance and that feeling that I always should be doing something."

For Anne, the balance was not just a time balance and the compulsion to be continuously active, but it was also a balance in principles—trying to live out her principles regarding work as well as her principles regarding quality of home life. "[I am] trying to balance what I'm doing at work and what I believe in and what I'm trying to do in my personal life." Kate used a metaphor that many others used when speaking of the lack of balance: whirlwind.

> *We are all involved in such a whirlwind of activity that it's hard to stop and focus on what's really important such as family and relationships. There always seem*

> *to be times when I feel my various roles of mother, worker, wife, etc., are conflicting or all grasping for my personal "alone" time of which I have none.*

She clearly named the desire to have paid work, and the choice to have a family demands sacrifice. The sacrifices she identified are time with her husband and time for herself. Sally agreed that the daily task was keeping everything going smoothly and not feeling guilt when it did not. Like Anne, she was weary or, more accurately, burned out. Her metaphor was one of being strangled by all the demands between the workplace, family, and studying:

> *[My job is] a high burnout area, and I've pretty well reached that point. I really need to be doing something different with my life. . . . I'm in a very traditional relationship with my husband, . . . so I don't cut the lawn or change the oil, and neither does he cook or clean or wash. . . . I'm feeling guilty about not paying enough attention to either my children or my husband or my mother . . . and how to balance all of that out so that I don't feel like I'm being strangled.*

At first glance, the issue of balance appears to have been an issue of quantity of time: managing a heavy workload within work hours, time for immediate and extended family as well as friends, time for personal endeavours such as further education and fitness, and time for household maintenance. At second glance, balance appears to have been an issue of too many roles and relational expectations: worker, friend, adult child, sibling and perhaps partner and parent. The implication is that after individuals contribute their prime time and energy at work, there is not enough time or energy to give to important relationships, and there are too many roles to play in nonwork time. Imbalance was a pace that was too busy, a life filled with too many obligations, the compulsion to keep going, and competing priorities that all result in perennial weariness, stress, and sometimes despair.

This chapter and Chapter Nine argue that the issue of balance again points to something else that this is all about. Underlying the issue of yearning to make a difference, we found the issue of disillusionment. Under disillusionment we found ethical dilemmas in both workplaces and home lives that create a sense of powerlessness. This chapter proposes that under the yearning for balance lies the issue of fragmentation which is fostered by the mechanistic structures of society.

Drawing from the existentialists, Schutz and Luckmann (1973) suggested that each of us inhabit different lifeworlds[33] at different times of day, such as the lived world of work and the lived world of home. Phenomenologists have contended that there are four lifeworld "existentials" that are fundamental to any experience in these lived worlds: lived space, lived body, lived time and lived human relations (van Manen, 1990: 101).

- Lived space or spatiality generally refers to the world or landscape in which human beings move—space that is felt, perhaps as comfortable or strange. Certain activities happen in certain kinds of spaces, driven by personal preferences but also by social and cultural conventions.
- Lived time or temporality is felt time as well as clock time. It includes the sense of past, present, and future along with the feelings that accompany these dimensions, perhaps hope or despair.
- Lived body or corporeality is our physical and bodily presence in the world. This includes how our body feels and the circumstances that impact our bodies.
- Lived relations or relationality are the connections we have with others and the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal space that supports these connections.

Together these grounds of experience form a unity that is a "lifeworld." Through the participants' descriptions of their lifeworlds, the task was to understand the ontology of working and living. Therefore these four existentials shall be used as important guides for reflection and to discern the faces of fragmentation as well as what lies beneath.

THREADS OF FRAGMENTATION: WHIRLING DERVISHES AND WORK

When discussing balance, many of the participants described feeling pulled apart or being in a whirlwind of too much to do in too little time. Moreover, they talked about feeling scattered in trying to meet all the expectations—in their workplaces, of those for whom they care, or for themselves. Feeling fragmented is experiencing living and working as pieces of time and space that are broken or detached and have been dispersed in many directions or into ineffectual small portions. As the participants described below, there is the feeling of both ineffectuality and incompleteness. This chapter shall address the existentials of fragmentation, and at the end of the chapter, the participants described what they think their daily experience would feel like if it was not fragmented or unbalanced—their intuitions of wholeness.

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[33] Husserl (as cited in Van Manen, 1990) described the *lifeworld* as the "world of immediate experience" (182) prior to any critical reflection or theorizing

Fragmentation of Space and Relationality

Anne

In Anne's lived world of work, fragmentation was comprised of a scattered focus, waning energy for people, the pressure to perform, and feelings of guilt and failure. The metaphor she used is *whirling dervishes*. She used this metaphor to communicate the lack of structure and incompletion that she felt daily in her job:

> *I [am] feeling tired and not mentally sharp. . . . There's a lot of problem solving with people, which is normally my strength and what I like to be part of. . . . At the same time we're also being asked to do a lot of paperwork, . . . and that's hard work to do when the phone is ringing constantly and staff are coming in to talk about "How do we do this?" . . . There's always work that I could bring home; there's always things unfinished, . . . [and] seeing people around me whose jobs are relatively structured. Mine isn't structured; mine is whirling dervishes.*

She explained that her focus was fragmented, which led to the feeling of guilt, for if she put the phone and staff demands first, then she had to answer for the incompleted paperwork. The number of incompleted tasks, she said, gave her a feeling that she was not working at all. She tried to make up for the lack of focus by settling down in the evening to do her paperwork, significantly lengthening her workday:

> *I'm using the work day to answer the phone and shuffle a few papers and then I'm planning on, oh well, I'll just work a couple hours tonight because I didn't really use my time well today. . . . Time is a challenge.*

What does it mean when one describes his/her work as whirling dervishes? Whirling connotes a spiralling or rapid circling motion such as the "whirlwind" about which Kate talked. Whirling can also refer to a dizzying, confused movement or mental state. For Anne, her work was a whirling motion, a constant motion; but motion that did not result in any productive results from her point of view. There was no structure; her work felt fluid and unpredictable, with no beginning and no end. It contained fragments in which she dabbled in one task, then another and another, with little sense of completion. Her own self-assessment was that she was not managing time well and therefore felt that she was not working, or rather, not producing tangible results from her expended energy. There is nothing to hang on to or to measure progress by except the responses of others—constant requests, criticism, guilt, or pressure to perform.

Islamic sufism is organized into dervish orders. In these mystic orders, the members are devoted to ritual as a way to experience God. In particular, they practice vigorous circular dancing, jumping, chanting, and breathing, which lead to hypnosis as a way to experience transcendence or union with God. The purpose of this ecstaticism is to lose oneself in Divine love (Thompson, 1999). Although Anne's daily work experience converged with some aspects of whirling dervishes, the intended purpose of whirling dervishes for transcendence diverges from the expectations that Anne had for her work.

The purpose for Anne was to stay "sharp, focussed" and able to shift well from one task to another so that all the tasks were not only completed, but also done well, according to her high standards. The interruptions that necessitated constant shifts of focus were tiring, and she felt that she had lost her "sharpness" or her ability to converge her energies into a single point of attentiveness. When there are too many tasks to do, the sense of impacting one's world is diminished. Like the Sufi whirling dervishes, the constant movement can induce a hypnotic effect that dulls one's physical senses as an openness to transcendence. Given a job with too many tasks and given the need to constantly change focus to many matters throughout the day, clarity gives way to a fuzziness or dispersion of energy:

> *The workload is so huge. . . . It's easy to slip into the mode of just being a presence at work, and then at four-thirty when everything is quiet, you settle down to begin to do the work, and then you work all night.*

When the energy becomes dispersed in so many directions and when the fruit of one's energy appears minimal, Anne lost the sense of being fully conscious, although physically present. Work that is whirling dervishes is constant and hypnotic motion in which time slips away, tasks are dispersed fragments, jobs are incomplete, and consciousness is partial. Rather than transcendence, the result is perennial frustration and overwork.

The key aspect for Anne's work is the need for "structure," in which there is a definite pattern of organization and the parts have a *gestalt* or, rather, a general pattern that connotes the whole. Although she spent time on various fragments—paperwork reviews, staff requests, phone calls, and writing policy manuals—they did not seem to add up to a *gestalt* or feeling of working. In sum, then, describing one's work as whirling dervishes is describing fragmented work—work that is detached from any sense of the larger structure. It is work that is vigorous motion and isolated tasks without any connected purpose or predictability. It is this lack of overall purpose that diverges from the intent of the whirling dervishes. The unpredictability of each day compromises any well-intentioned plans that Anne had. Let us examine this sense of fragmented work more deeply from Anne's interrelated references to space, relations, body, and time.

The space in which Anne did her work is an office. It is a confined space in which others are constantly "coming into." This space is bounded to afford her the space to "do her job"—a desk for paperwork and walls for privacy and concentration. The space as provided was designed to accommodate writing work that required focus and privacy. In reality, however, the space was not bounded at all. The phone was ringing constantly, and her staff were continually walking in asking for her guidance. These interpenetrations into her bounds are considered "interruptions" of her space or, more specifically, the focussed mental space required for paperwork or people. Therefore she experienced her physical and mental space as interrupted, in which one or the other constantly barraged her focus. Her focus then was fragmented between people and paper, reducing both the sense of balance and the sense of making a difference:

> *I think my job is too big and I'm spread too thinly, so the ability to make a difference has kind of diminished. And that's really a personal struggle, whether I would be better to be focussed more in some small area than trying to throw a bit of energy at a thousand things.*

Underneath the interruptions that disperse energy and focus, there was a competing relationality that resided within her work lifeworld. The feeling that arose with each interruption was apprehension, as she anticipated the criticism from missed paperwork deadlines or criticism for not assisting her staff. The paperwork itself was symbolic of a relationship, but the immediacy of the physical presence of her staff and the urgency of the ringing phone were more demanding. This immediacy consistently required "sudden" responses, not responses arrived at through thoughtful reflection. Within Anne's ethic of service, people came first, so she repressed her anxiety about the paperwork in order to be of assistance to her staff. The day, then, simply became an accumulation of one's sudden responses on a host of largely unconnected situations.

Lingering underneath her patience with her staff, however, was deep anxiety about "getting everything done." For what is not done at the job site will follow her to "interrupt" her family time in the evening. Furthermore, her workday was progressively starting earlier and earlier:

> *It's not unusual to have meetings at 5:30 a.m. in the morning with people because everybody's days are so full that you have to. . . . Three years ago the earliest meeting I ever went to was seven. . . . [It] really made me start to think about, What am I doing?*

With her workday lengthening on either end, the competing relationality between work and home became unmanageable, leaving her wondering about the purpose of it all. Yet, the action she considered necessary was very difficult to do:

> *What I need to do is work more on respecting myself, that my work time is when I'm at work. . . . I know all my eggs are not in the work basket. . . . I know how important the rest of my life is, and I need to work at the relationships and all the rest of it, but I still have this issue of making good decisions with my time, my work time.*

Anne considered this a time-management issue in which paid responsibilities invaded other relational responsibilities. In the ever-present conflict between the priorities of relationships at work and at home, the "balancing act" was moving beyond attending to some relationships at the expense of others.

The corporeal impact of this strained time is weariness. The lack of time to spend in each area of one's life and the competing expectations result in drained energy:

> *I think partly it was from being stretched so thinly that I was beginning to feel myself I wasn't doing a good job at anything. It sort of somehow entered into my being. . . . Then also looking at, how do I replenish this boundless energy I once had? Where has it gone? Because I can always work longer and harder than most any one I know because I see the joy in what I do.*

Joy in her work and staying focussed on the big purpose had previously allowed her to replenish her energy. But the store of energy is running down and the weariness is accumulating, given the combined effects of disillusionment, an expanded workload, and a fragmented work structure. Like that of most people, her assessment was that "I'm not using my energy well at work." But as she began to say, the sense of not being able to do a good job according to her professional and personal principles had entered into her being and blocked her joy and ability to replenish her energy.

Fragmentation of Space and Body

Kate

Kate experienced the same busyness, scatteredness, and lack of productivity that Anne described. Her biggest concern was the emotional spillover effect from work to home and her sense of depletion:

> *I am feeling very angry and upset this evening and I can't explain why. I had quite a busy day at work, although I don't feel as though I accomplished anything. It seemed as if my day was very scattered with many demands, but none of them fitting together or meaningful. I came home feeling exhausted, and my work day seemed to spill over into my evening. I had trouble focussing and getting my family together to do what we needed to do—go get groceries and take the kids to the library. . . . I am exhausted when I get home from work these days. And I recognize that change in myself, a sense of depletion.*

Kate carried around anger at a day that was so fragmented and in which there is little sense of accomplishment. Fragmentation for her was the result of demands that did not fit together into a meaningful whole and in which there was no overall set of priorities upon which to judge one's work or a focus that hinges one's efforts together. For Kate, the fragmented demands created a visceral response of exhaustion. When a purpose was lacking, her energy was unreplenished, like a machine running down. She identified a key relationship between purpose and energy that flowed between her lifeworlds or the spaces she inhabited.

Once she spent an unfocussed day, the frustration flowed through the rest of her day, and consequently the activities required to keep her family organized did not occur easily. As Kate's experience demonstrates, fragmentation is carried in the body from space to space. Although "[balance] is both a time and energy issue," Kate went beyond this understanding and tied it to purpose. She knew that in the past she had spent similar amounts of time and energy in her work, but she did not have the sense of depletion because there was a sense of purpose. Therefore, a sense of purpose drives the sense of time as well as the replenishment of energy. The experience of fragmentation is directly related, then, to a sense of purposelessness in the activities and therefore a sense of wasted time. "As long as work was fulfilling, I could justify the time spent there."

As in Anne's experience, the workload and hours at work have been steadily increasing. When Kate started 12 years ago, she worked a seven-hour work day. That progressively escalated up to eight hours, decreasing the time she had with her children. Similarly, overtime is an "unwritten expectation" to make one's way up the ladder, yet it is not paid overtime nor "time in lieu of." She saw those around her tired and stressed from the long hours, and this "made me very angry as I felt I was being exploited by my employers. There was one value placed on my time, which to me is the most valuable and rare commodity that I have." Finally, she decided that "it isn't worth it" to try to keep up. The other option was to "cruise" and keep receiving her paycheck; but she said she could not take this route because she would feel that she was "wasting her time." "Here's my kids, and there's things that I could be doing with them and for them, and I'm in this office, right? It's not working. I'm not happy."

Kate talked about the exploitation of working overtime without pay for the purposes of company profit. Now that she deemed her work as not making a contribution, no longer was she willing to participation in self-exploitation. Kate tied together exploitation and purposelessness with disillusionment. As the illusions became apparent around the value of her work and the willingness to pay for it, and as the demands placed on her lacked an overall purpose, her energy was channeled into suppressed anger, and she felt exhausted. The anger built when she carried this fragmentation and weariness home and was unable to parent her children with focus and patience. Fragmentation, then, is carrying out too many tasks that do not have an overarching sense of purpose, so that energy is replenished.

As many Eastern religious traditions assert, energy is the conscious force that is life itself. In ancient Indian wisdom, the life force is *prana* (Myss, 1996; Thompson, 1999). Energy or one's *prana* is power. When an individual's power to do what he/she believes to be "the good" is compromised and his/her energy is compromised, the result is weakened desire; in this case, for doing the work. With each participant, there were conflicting principles manifested as lack of energy. As Myss (1996) suggested, "What drains your spirit drains your body" (77). Kate found it necessary to take a stress leave to deal with this conflict. With Sally, the connection between ill-health and her lack of power to effect change and engage her life force was pivotal.

Fragmentation Between Body and Time

Sally

> *Twenty-eight years ago I started this mind set thought that I, and I alone, should be doing these domestic chores; i.e., cleaning house, cooking, laundry, shopping; and if you have a few hours in the day you can go outside the home to help bring in an income to buy the kids shoes, clothes, and toys that husband isn't about to buy because he's too busy doing his work toward his own career which he loves dearly.*

Sally was working a double day—her paid job and housework—even a triple day when one adds in family relationships and studying. She explained that she and her husband have the post-WWII expectations of a woman who works full-time in the household, even though Sally also worked full-time in the workforce. This pattern began in the early years of their marriage, when, to meet both the demands of raising three young children and the need for extra income, she took on income-generating work. But she worked within the confines of her home because she knew she could not make enough to pay for daycare. She offered room and board services to the mentally disabled, but this amount of work was overwhelming and compromised her feeling of security:

> *I did all the cooking and cleaning for everyone. . . . It certainly was a big deal feeding nine people at the table breakfast and supper. The grocery shopping and meal planning to make a profit as well as provide healthy food for everyone was exhausting. . . . And the clientele always made me feel unsafe. Clients had a key to the house and on occasion brought home a friend of theirs that I knew nothing about.*

When her youngest child was in Grade 1, Sally began working full-time with the physically disabled in the school system and studying part-time in the rehabilitation program. But the load of family, household, and work responsibilities contributed to a medical diagnosis requiring blood infusions every two weeks. "My hopes were dashed to work with the deaf. I had no more energy or life left. I still kept my full-time job but moved to the early education program.. The weekends were spent washing, ironing, cooking, cleaning, and driving kids to hockey, basketball, tae-kwon-do." She continued to work full-time to ensure that her family had health care benefits and dental coverage, as well as clothing, home furnishings, lessons for the children, and other "extras."

Hard, back-breaking work was not foreign to Sally. As a granddaughter of a large pioneer Ukrainian family, she was taught the necessity of growing, preparing, and preserving all your own foodstuffs, along with doing the farming chores. As the daughter of a divorced woman who fought daily the stigmas from church and community, she laboured long hours beside her mother in several small, nonlucrative retail businesses. She married a man who did not believe in unions for his cabinet-making craft. He fiercely protected his independence without union benefits and by weathering the annual economic downturns as a small independent craftsperson:

> *I think it's been disappointing for him as well, in that we're not doing as well financially as we thought we would 28 years ago. And I'm not so sure that he's particularly happy with that choice. And I know there have been many times that I have been not happy at all with that choice because it's been devastating . . . when your major bread winner has been without a wage for three months and there's no UIC coming in and I'm making what I'm making.*

In the last chapter, Sally explained that she was burned out from an unrewarding job in which she was no longer able to do the physical work required. The source of the burnout, however, was not just the lack of power in her paid job or the physical strain; beyond her paid labour, she was also doing two kinds of household labour: physical labour and caring labour. The physical labour included cleaning the house; straightening up the house; purchasing, cleaning, and repairing clothes; cooking and serving food; cleaning dishes; dealing with refuse; yard care; car maintenance; banking and paying bills; caring for pets and plants; and purchasing and repairing commodities. Beside all this was the labour of caring—providing medical services for both the young and aged, supervision of children, cleanliness of children, emotional caring, social guidance, breast feeding, toilet and sleep training, safety training, discipline, educational assistance, involvement in play, and doctor, dental, and public health appointments. Many of the expectations around each of these kinds of labour carry enormous cultural and personal messages. Sally's struggle was to keep this overwhelming workload at bay so that the household ran smoothly on a day-to-day basis for all the others in the household.

Despite her back-breaking labour, her predominant feelings were perennial guilt, imprisonment, martyrdom, and being strangled. The issue was not just the long hours and physical exhaustion, but also her need for emotional support in these caring capacities and for the hours in which she squeezed in her own pursuits, such as further education:

> *I have taken courses before, and I find that after I'm involved so much, I'm feeling guilty. . . . I have an aged parent who's also in a wheelchair. I also sense from my husband that I don't have full support from him for studies, for extra studies, so I'm out there on my own.*

The need for emotional support, bodily rest, and leisure time was not recognized in the current gender roles that she and her husband lived out, for she was the "caregiver," whereas her husband was the "breadwinner," and her paid work and housework labour fell into the invisible gap between. She felt that she ought to be available at all hours for the kids, so there were no physical and emotional limits on the caring labour.

In the triple workload of juggling of full-time work both in and out of the home with little emotional support, Sally's body was progressively giving out:

> *Yes, I was really bad by the time I was on this [treatment] four years ago. Oh, every two weeks I was sick. Every two weeks there was something major. I was on antibiotics just constantly. . . . Some of it could be due to stress. . . .The doctor thinks that it just is something I've developed. . . . I wouldn't doubt [that it is related to my work burnout].*

Sally had a life-threatening disease that became critical four years ago, five years after she began working full-time and at the same time as the major changes were occurring in the education sector. The powerlessness within her work position, the lack of recognition at work, the lack of emotional support at home, and the sense of responsibility for the family financial situation created her burnout, which was built on acknowledged servitude at work and home:

> *[My] working life has been that of a servant to others. . . . everything has been for his career, and nothing has been for mine. . . . I repeated the work habits of my mother—that 1-hour day and no time for myself. To sum it up, working in the family business was unfulfilling and low wage or no wage. Working for the school board was boring and unfulfilling, but provided good time for parenting. Being a housewife and mother was fulfilling but no pay at all, and hours were long. Doing the freelancing was again long hours and exhausting work with no time for myself— that 18-hour day. . . . I came to a point where I felt that I was the sacrificial lamb, the body on the cross, . . . by giving, giving, giving yourself up to long hours of work and exhausting toil and sincere caring with little recognition or support; . . . the blood dripping, martyred.*

She repeatedly described her fulfillment through mothering, but the conditions under which she worked were sacrificial. Martrydom was to sacrifice oneself for a principle or thing of great value—her children. She did not begrudge this and considered mothering to have been her vocation to this point. Now, a teaching from her grandfather was becoming of primary importance:

> *My grandfather . . . taught his twelve children that what knowledge you have in your mind no one can take away from you. I was raised with this thought by my mother, and I have passed it on to my children, and now I want to fulfill that dream.*

An unplanned pregnancy and her husband's choice of career set out the direction for 28 years of her life when that dream was submerged. Repeatedly, she sacrificed her own goals of pursuing a postsecondary education and a career of her own choosing. Now, however, fitted in around all these other activities and as her children left the nest, she was inching along in her education.

Fragmentation for Sally, then, was long hours of paid and unpaid labour, physical exhaustion compounded by serious health issues, and the lack of recognition and emotional support that would have nourished her. Caught in the shifting of gender roles—in work at home and work in the market—Sally had a mix of cultural and economic expectations that resulted in a condition of health-threatening overwork. She was alienated from what her body and her spirit required by self-imposed and culturally expected relationships. Dan shared the fragmentation that resulted from competing relationships, but these were primarily in his home life.

Fragmentation of Time and Relationships

Dan

Dan's time at work was stable and did not flow over into his home time. His job was not particularly stressful, except that it was monotonous and he was losing the sense of challenge and reward. Rather, he identified his "imbalance" as all the competing demands from different relationships, "sort of like my life is this whirlwind and I am trying to find a few minutes of calm, but I can't":

> *I'm just so busy all the time and so stressed all the time, and it's like, it is enough! . . . I'm a father, I'm a worker, I'm a, let's call it a boyfriend for lack of a better word, . . . but I can't be seven people. . . . .If I had nobody in my life and I was just a father and a worker, then yes, I could do those two fairly well. But when you start adding in soccer coach and boyfriend and son and grandson and things, then nothing gets the attention it needs.*

Dan's personal life was fragmented because he "played" seven people rather than one person in seven relationships. The seven people, then, were not part of a whole, a gestalt of who Dan was. At the moment, Dan was the sum of adding up these fragments of roles, rather than all these fragments being suffused into an overall purpose or sense of a greater whole.

As Anne and Kate also explained, there is a sense of finiteness where there is only so much of oneself to go around. Dan knew that he had limited time outside of his work, so he tried to "fit in" appropriate or equal time with each of his important relationships and commitments. He knew that he could not be seven people. Yet, he felt that being just one person was at the expense of six other people. He felt that he was losing ground in equally dividing his time and that the pressure was building. The sum of all these relationships was the sense of busyness and stress, trying to meet all the external demands and internal expectations of what it meant to be a "good" father, son, grandson, boyfriend, friend, community member, and so forth. This was trying to be "being seven people," like a puppet on a many strings:

> *All the time I feel pulled, . . . one area at the expense of others. If they're all around the outside of a circle, I should be in the middle of the circle somewhere. And what happens is I get pulled one way, and then the others get neglected until I get pulled in another way. . . . I should be right in the middle of that circle and devote equal times, give or take. . . . I'm not sure how I'm going to go about getting this calm in my life. I don't know how much of that I have control over. I can . . . simplify my own style of living, but I'm not sure that they will ultimately impact in the result that I want. . . . Do all those add up to, on the other end, to inner peace?*

To reach the state of inner peace that Dan wanted, he suggested that he needed some fundamental hardwiring. At the moment, he envisioned his current life as a circle with all of his relationships around the perimeter. He moved into connection with one relationship and slackened this thread, but then felt that he was ignoring the others, so that those threads are overstretched. It is a sense of being "pulled" so that one cannot enjoy the relationship in which one is engaging at the present moment because of the guilt of ignoring the other relationships. He described the "pulling" as guilt that was both externally and internally generated. In contrast, his image of balance was to be rooted in the centre of the circle, interacting with each relationship rather than being pulled from point to point along the periphery. His search was to find a different way of looking at his life that would bind all these fragments together and take away the puppet nature.

There are many ways to understand Dan's struggle. The most obvious is to consider this struggle psychologically as the struggle between enmeshment and individuation. To individuate, one strives for self-direction so that one is no longer defined by others and by external roles, and therefore one is not fused to others through these roles. An individuated person takes responsibility for defining one's self and bringing this self into relationships of mutuality (Kegan, 1982). Drawing from Kegan, Conn (1989) described this as moving from "I *am* my relationships" to "I *have* relationships" (56). Similarly, Erikson (1950) talked about this as the search for ego integrity in which the roles that one plays and the intimacies that one shares eventually become integrated into an essential self. In both formulations, this essential or individuated self would be unmediated by significant others, institutions, or ideologies, but rather would stand firmly centered in a personal identity. The task of adult life is to move into this position of personal autonomy in which one can enter into authentic intimacy and not feel pulled. Chapter Nine will argue that this notion of the autonomous individual adds to the fragmented thinking that permeates adult development literature.

In a different formulation, Gestalt therapy considers the process of adult development to be the movement from having to being, similar to Fromm's thinking in the previous chapter. Drawing from notions of ecological systems, adult development is learning to become a self-regulating organism by overcoming the splits or fragments that are the roles we play or masks we wear when we "have" relationships. Frederick Perls (1959) called these our "dependencies" that we develop to have some control over our environments. Perls said that

> *without a centre, everything goes on in the periphery and there is no place from which to work, from which to cope with the world; . . . this achieving the center, a being grounded in one's self, is about the highest state a human being can achieve.*

Without a center, one is not alert or aware of the images around which one constructs one's roles to avoid personal growth, keep others happy, and let society go unchallenged. In this state we ask the world to see for us rather than seeing for ourselves, to hear for us rather than hearing for ourselves. We remain hypnotized by cultural messages and create a sense of control through our own busyness, including playing roles.

Yet, the issue of roles and developing a center goes deeper to pervasive cultural myths. Our culture values activity, not beingness. Therefore we feel in control by being active, and in this way busyness is attractive as a sign of importance and success. The cultural belief is that we can better ourselves and our society only through activity. This excludes the important aspects of solitude, space, and being in relationship. Silence, inactivity, and being with another are considered wasteful and slothful. Hence, it is the modern way to wring as much as possible out of every moment, to be purposeful in all things, to get the most out of life, to be all we can be. This again is the having mode in which we amass activity as a way to "self-wholeness" and "other-responsibility."

Wholeness then becomes the mastering of all of our relationships and the filling of our lives with incessant activity. In this way, the road to wholeness has been culturally understood as the road of busyness. This is what Dan was questioning, for he was aware that busyness, particularly in relationships, was not leading him to wholeness, just as materialism was not leading him to peace. Typically, there are two ways of searching for this illusive balance.

The typical approach to the problem of balance has typically been time-management strategies, as Anne identified. The participants groped down passageways looking for the skills and capacities to more effectively perform the balancing act. They saw themselves as jugglers "being tossed a few more balls," as Dan described it, and they are looking for experts to teach advanced juggling. The balls in their life or, as others described it, the boxes or roles, are seen as discrete and isolated areas in their life, each with its own social structures, behavioural expectations, and identity requirements. They compartmentalized their lives, and the switch from worker to parent, from housecleaner to lover, from manager to adult child, from soccer coach to friend takes continual energy and refocusing. To add to the pressure, there is no end to the experts who prescribe learning for success, mastery, or excellence in each of these fields of endeavour—job, home, family relationships, friendships, or community organizations.

As the demands in each of these roles increase and as the pace becomes more intense, we are, as Kegan (1994) called it, "in over our heads." It is a continual struggle to master each area of one's life as well as master the competing expectations whilst maintaining one's integrity. Slowly the sense of mastery is increasingly becoming the "helplessness to change anything" and the desire to "pull the plug." This gives credence to Marcuse's (1964) assessment that "contemporary society seems to be capable of containing social change—qualitative change which would establish essentially different institutions, a new direction of the productive process, new modes of human existence" (xii). Change has been contained as people are distracted by this call for mastery.

Within this mastery approach is the expert who can make sense out of the juggling by offering the key skill necessary to address this complexity. As Kegan (1994) observed, this is the search for an epistemological answer that is an extension to the Enlightenment tradition of pursuing a progressive mastery of our world and now of our inner selves. However, as Giddens (1995) suggested, it is not the lack of knowledge, but the very accumulation of knowledge that is giving the sensation of a world and individual lives spinning out of control. This accumulation of knowledge compels the need for decisions where decisions have never been made before, increasing the anxiety and contestation over knowledge. Even though the participants sensed that this was not an epistemological question, they were most familiar with this strategy.

Another search is for a "different way of looking" at their life than as a juggling act. As Dan intuited, "There's going to have to be some fundamental hardwiring redone for me to get here." At the moment, however, the search is not for ways to resist fragmentation or ways to reconstruct contemporary life. Yet, what the participants described in the section below was not the need for another learning prescription or a higher order of thinking. Rather, they were groping outside of learning prescriptions for something that will give sense to all the pieces. They were not exhibiting trust in their unlimited capacity to command their worlds. In fact, they clearly questioned whether or not they had the control to impact this whirlwind even in a limited way. Most important, there is a subtle questioning of the dominant order because of the way they saw it distorting their lives. They themselves named the illness burnout, broken relationships, and vulnerability, as well as the information and work overload that testifies to the destructiveness of fragmentation. This chapter illustrated how fragmentation impacts time, space, body, and relationships.

What is so profound in the texture of these people's lives is the depth of fragmentation that has obscured possibilities beyond learning to cope. The participants came to the course searching for such a way out. As Kate said, "I guess I know I need to make a change, but I am not sure what that change is, but when I saw [the course publicity], I thought there would be some things here that would help me."

Each person faced a dilemma in which ethics and commitments were conflicting. So although it is easy to assert that less stress or more family time would make people's lives more satisfying, as the Harwood Group (1996) suggested, this is a daunting task. First, creating less stress and more family time challenges the very structure of working and living in contemporary society. We have just seen how the participants felt caught in these structures. Second, the issues of disillusionment and fragmentation go much deeper to the contradictions within our society, including cultural assumptions of the good life and the ethical conflicts within the workplace. Dan intuited that the way forward to balance would take him on a spiritual search, as did other participants.

INTUITIONS OF WHOLENESS AND THE HARWOOD STUDY

Even though the participants did not see any obvious way out of the squirrel cage of disillusionment or out of the rat race of fragmentation, in what direction were they searching? Gena explained in our first conversation:

> *[I have an image] that there wouldn't be a break between who I was at home and who I was at work. I think, coming back to this transforming thing, that I'm trying to move more towards my purpose, and my job will just be one of the means of expressing that. . . . I think if I do what is right and fits me, that I will have enough; I'll be provided for by what I'm giving out.*

Gena described an image of wholeness and integrity in which her life was not compartmentalized, but she had a consistent identity and overarching purposefulness that gave meaning to all her tasks and relationships. She also carried a sense of providence which, if she sought out her vocation and found what is "right" for her to be doing, she would be provided for. This was not a rugged individualist meeting the challenges of a competitive society, but one who was searching for a cosmological and ontological coherence—a place in the cosmos that provides meaning for "being-in-the-world."

Many of the participants talked about balance in a way that was beyond compartmentalized conceptions and in ways that pointed toward wholeness and integrity.

They also linked their health issues with this search for balance. This makes intuitive sense, for as David Bohm (1980) wrote:

> *It is instructive to consider that the word 'health' in English is based on an Anglo-Saxon word 'hale' meaning 'whole,' . . . roughly the equivalent of the Hebrew 'shalom' [and] the English 'holy.' . . . All of this indicates that [humans have] sensed always that wholeness or integrity is an absolute necessity to make life worth living, . . . that our] deepest urges [are] toward wholeness and integrity. (3)*

That health, wholeness, and spirituality are profoundly linked is ancient wisdom. Ky clearly named her spirituality as the cohering condition of wholeness:

> *Many people in the workplace are, "Here's my briefcase. It's closed." And their persona, their whole being is not with them in their job. . . . We [need] to be sort of whole beings wherever we [are]. . . . You don't need to throw that whole part of you away just to go to a certain job site. I am a spiritual person, but . . . it's got to be more an integrated process that is beyond just prayer and meditation but is part of just how your whole life goes.*

At the moment, even her spirituality was compartmentalized into a little box, and that, she said, was what she wanted to change. She perceived that if her spirituality was woven through all that she did, then her presence in the world would be whole in a way that was healing to others—at home and at work. Dan and Sally have also talked about this peacefulness and way of being that puts working and living into a fuller context. Yearning for balance and to make a difference, then, are about transcending disillusionment and fragmentation toward an intuition of what wholeness means.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THREADING THE LABYRINTH:

PEDAGOGICAL MEDIATION OF TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

> *Continuity, and a sense of unity, despite the multitude and diversity of individual experiences, are guaranteed by the active involvement of the learner who brings about changes not only in the objective conditions of her experience, but also in herself. In other words, she shapes the world around her as well as her own inner world, but this is possible only if this inner world, her own interests, desires, and purposes are fully involved in the experience, in fact, co-structure the experience itself. Interests, purposes, or desires are, however, anchored in, and only live in the concrete actuality, the here and now of the learner's bodily existence . . . as well as sensuous capacities. (Hart, 1992: 156)*

All of the participants came to this course desiring transformation or a significant change. What created this desire? The previous two chapters discussed the conditions of disillusionment and fragmentation that challenged each participant prior to course involvement. All the participants acknowledged that this was a diminished existence, and they yearned for wholeness, balance, and the opportunity to make a difference. There was a third condition, however, that also created the yearning for change. Many of them called this a life crossroad and identified two ways at arriving at a crossroad: a dramatic rupture and a slow burn or accumulation of issues.

ARRIVING AT A CROSSROAD

Natalie initially described herself as contented, yet she went on to describe how she had arrived at a crossroad—a divorce, her mother's death, a new job with an overwhelming workload, and workplace pressure to expand her education:

> *I am going through a divorce, so when I get that over with and get on with my own life . . . . I think this is probably one of the biggest crossroads. . . . I think my Mom's passing away really got me thinking about why I was living like this. . . . Then this job had come up. . . . But I still need to broaden my knowledge. . . . I think it's time that I kind of spread my wings and did something with my education.*

A crossroad is generally understood as the place where two or more roads intersect, often where a main road and smaller roads converge. At such a place, a crucial decision needs to be made as to which road to take. Natalie was in the process of weighing all the factors and, more important, asking questions of purpose. As Natalie said, she was looking for ideas that could help her decide which road to follow, and it was this task that drew her into the course.

Similarly, Sally suggested that her decision about a new vocation could not be made until key questions were, she hoped, answered. She compared this to the questions that arise in adolescence:

> *Maybe I'm just sort of at a crossroads in my life having, you know, questions as to where am I going or what am I doing? Or maybe those are teenage questions, I don't know, but for some reason I seem to be sort of stuck in limbo.*

The limbo about which she talked was the state of indecision, particularly about life path and life purpose. Together, Natalie and Sally's essential questions were, "What is my purpose here?" "Why am I living like this?" and "Where am I going?" Dan suggested that this state of indecision requires some reevaluation and "new looking" to shed light on the purpose and path questions to ultimately guide the decision-making process:

> *One of the questions I have is, and I don't know if I'll be able to address it [in the course], but one of the questions that I have in this crossroads that I'm at is, I've been this and I thought all these would equal this, and . . . it didn't work out that way. So which of these has to be . . . reevaluated or relooked at?*

Dan wanted to reexamine each area of his life to determine what his assumptions were and why he chose to live this way, and to make decisions regarding possible change. The social construction that he was living did not add up to the life he was expecting, and he thus came to the course seeking a path toward conscious living.

Not only is a crossroad an intersection of roads, but it can also mean a central meeting place or small community. Many of these participants came to this course in search of a community in which others share the crossroads questions. They needed to sit, rest awhile, find nourishment, and ponder the roads in discussion with others. These individuals were searching for three things: a new framework for understanding the story that brought them to this crossroad, a process for determining the best road forward, and companions with whom they could reflect and possibly travel.

As the participants shared their stories of what brought them to the crossroad, it became apparent that there were two interrelated ways of arriving at this crossroad. One path to the crossroad was a dramatic rupture in the fabric of one's life in which the need and energy for change were immediate to quell the chaos. The second path to the crossroad was an accumulation of issues, a slow burn, which over time created a crescendo of anxiety prompting change, but change for which they could plan.

Rupture

Rupture: It is a jarring word, a word that signifies a tear from which chaos bubbles out. Rupture is not something one seeks out, for it violates the security and control upon which we construct our lives. Chaos or a radical break is the antithesis of control and security and usually involves some form of externally created pain. For a number of participants, a dramatic occurrence over which they had little control quickly shifted their path. For Ky and Garth, the rupture was unemployment for both of them and a near-death experience of their daughter.

Ky and her husband felt "driven" to achieve material and job security and to accumulate a car, a house, and "everything that goes with [the house]." As they described it, they were in the stability "rut" or "treadmill," carefully planning each step of the way. True to their values regarding parenthood, for a number of years Ky worked at home full-time with their three children rather than in the workforce. Later she gradually increased her paid work hours as the children grew. They also enabled Garth to climb the career ladder toward management. "Everything kept on rolling the way we thought" until Garth was inexplicably fired and Ky did not get her expected promotion to a supervisory level, all within one year. Garth went on to a new salaried position requiring intensive hours, and Ky began contract work, but the crisis in their household soon became volcanic.

One afternoon Ky found herself running down a rural road, seeing police cars and ambulances and the roof cut off the new little car her teenaged daughter had just bought. Frantic, she saw them taking someone into the ambulance:

> *All I saw was a hand, . . . [but my daughter was in the police car]. We were all crying. She was just scratched and bruised. . . . I think it made us realize what was important in life; so that, I think, was probably the biggest transition. . . . It just makes you realize what's important in life, and it's not money and it's not trips and it's not cars; it's just people. . . . Next week, at her graduation ceremony we said] we could have been sitting in that same church, looking at her casket.*[34]

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[34] Her daughter's passenger friend who was on the stretcher was also not seriously injured.

All within a week, several events catalyzed an eruption that irrevocably changed their lives: their daughter's car accident and then graduation, Garth's decision to quit his latest job, her mother's hospitalization, and her son's broken arm. In such close succession, these events made them "realize what life was about." They decided to take the summer off to enjoy each other and their kids and then made a commitment to each other that they would evaluate their lives in the fall. This commitment coincided with Ky's participation in the course, which she hoped would assist them in this life evaluation and in making major changes to live what life was about.

Rose also experienced a dramatic rupture that transformed her life. As a survivor of breast cancer for four years prior to the course, she said that she saw people all around her caught in "the groove"—the planned trajectory of their lives—until something catalyzed the meaning-of-life questions and radical changes. Her first brush with cancer "didn't give me enough thump; I didn't pay attention." In her second experience with cancer, the doctor gave her less than a year to live. From this near-death experience, Rose made the major decisions to change her job, end all the emotionally and physically abusive relationships in her life, and transform her fundamental approach to life:

> *The thumps on my head [were] to get it knocked into me that I can't live like this and [to] do something for somebody I really care about. So I got to know my grandsons, and I got very close to my daughter, and I figure that's the best thing in the world, . . . part of a reformation that I didn't have to live the way I was living. I didn't have to be abused. . . . I've been bawled out for saying this, but it was the best thing that could have happened at the time—not the cancer, but everything related to it. It gave me such a big scope on life, which I'd been closing out with blinders.*

This rupture gave her the fighting determination that she was not going to die! It gave her the energy day by day to create new patterns of living and working in her life. Although she had "been on the path of the new patterns for a while, . . . I never got there, and I think it's because I really didn't have a motive or an incentive to get to that point yet." The questioning and moments of doubt with which she had been struggling had not yet crystallized. With her life on the line, she was no longer willing to settle for the security of existing patterns. In the first interview, she exuded a peaceful energy that prompted my puzzlement about why she wanted to take this course. She firmly stated that she felt compelled to take this course to continue her life analysis, affirm her journey, continue her changes, and learn how to assist others in their transition.

In a rupture, then, all the contradictions and disillusionment with which Ky, Garth, and Rose had been living for some time flowed out in a chaotic way. A dramatic rupture offered them a clarifying moment in time where the old horizon of meaning suddenly faded and no longer held them captive. What had been considered of importance suddenly appeared trivial. What was of importance appeared as illusions to which they could no longer subscribe. What they were not making enough time for were suddenly the most important priorities and they acted quickly to shift to the priorities they believed to be most important.

Most often the rupture is so sudden and chaotic that it involves the loss of control and security. With immediate decisions forced on them by the loss of jobs or a life-threatening situation, they immediately harnessed their internal and external resources to make change. Although there was some planning, their reflection often occurred in the midst of action. Therefore, the process of change moved quickly for them, with major changes in the structure of their lives occurring within a few short years. Ky suggested that a new understanding of control and security was the biggest gain from her rupture experience:

> *I don't know that control is a big issue for me any more. I think I'm happier with [life] evolving rather than controlling it. . . . I think you can put so much effort and so much worry, so much of your life energy into this whole illusion of control, but I don't really know that it's important any more.*

With the loss of the need to control their lives, the participants who had experienced a rupture eventually came to understand this not as a time of crisis but as a life-giving opportunity to change their life patterns and expand their boundaries of self. As Rose said:

> *It was just like a burden was lifted when I realized that this is what had happened, and I thought, "I'm free. At last, I'm free!" . . . You don't plan too far ahead because you don't know if you're going to be here tomorrow or not. . . . Everything that drained [me] is gone—and now I give my energy [to others] . . . to ease people's path.*

Because they all believed that the experience of losing control gave them many important gifts and a new road to travel, the need to retain control over their lives eased. They were more willing to entertain unexpected gifts and flow with events instead of following a pre-established plan. In fact, the rupture was so dramatic that it was considered divine intervention and offered a different viewpoint of their life plan altogether. With most of the participants, however, such a dramatic rupture did not occur, but an accumulation of issues that brought them to a crossroad.

The Slow Burn

Through their years of adult living, many of the participants had faced a number of serious issues that required decisions and action. Seven of the participants had faced a serious illness of their own. Two participants had recently experienced the death of a parent, three were currently assisting a family member with cancer, six had undergone a divorce in the preceding five years, two faced unemployment, and two faced a new understanding of their sexual identity. One of these experiences was often not enough to trigger a substantial change process, but for most of the participants, they were dealing with several issues simultaneously, which significantly increased their level of anxiety and thus the desire for change. In each respect, the desire for change was most often prompted by the possibility of death: the threat of physical death; the death/near death of a loved one; or the death of a part of one's identity (for instance, as a spouse, worker, parent, adult child, or heterosexual).

Kate was daily facing the restructuring of her work tasks and an increasing workload, and it was the news that her mother had a degenerative disease that triggered the desire for change. Most of her purpose and path questions surfaced because of her mother's illness and prompted her to reflect on the meaning of her work:

> *Now with Mom's illness, . . . I think that's a lot of what's made me kind of question some of the things that are going on in my life. . . . I saw all through her life she really was kind of looking forward to the time when there would be more time for them together, . . . and then this is what ends up happening, right?*

The work issues, the disillusionment and fragmentation issues, can lie dormant for some time until an event triggers them. Such a trigger for Kate was the serious illness of her mother, which provided the need to focus on difficult questions, life-long patterns, and cultural scripts.

> *I think to a large degree[Mom] put off a lot of maybe what she would have liked to do or the things she enjoyed doing because she had this focus on, "We've got to make it." And my Dad's so driven; he's a workaholic. Farming is a different kind of workaholism. So I think I saw her dedicating herself to him and what he*

> *wanted and everything. And I guess I started to look and almost see to some degree my life modelled that way a bit. . . . So it's even just trying to figure out what it is that you would truly like to do. . . . I'm still struggling with getting, I don't know if it's the courage to just make the change? And the change that I'm thinking of is leaving work and just starting fresh almost.*

She questioned issues of gender submission, workaholism, postponing pleasure, and not living one's sense of purpose. Although she was unhappy with the new job she had been given in the company restructuring, it was her mother's illness that prompted a more reflective approach to all the existing patterns in her life, including the possibility of leaving her work.

In Sally's struggle to balance the demands of her job, her family, the household, as well as her studies, the burnout from this demanding triple day manifested itself in a life-threatening illness. Although she had been living with this illness for several years, her body was losing its ability to withstand the physical rigours necessary in her work with preschool children. Her constant pain prompted her to search for a way to make a change that would be least disruptive financially and emotionally to her family but offer her a way out of the gridlock. Two of her three children had left home to pursue their own paths, and out of her empty nest reflections she realized the need to shift her vocational identity:

> *I guess it's such a combination of things at my stage of life. My children are growing older. They're leaving the nest, and because that's my vocation, or has been my vocation, I've found that very difficult. . . . Yes, this has come to an end, and so I need to find a way to fulfill that . . . through studying and through seeking. . . . I feel that I've given a great sacrifice in [not] finding my own career so that [my husband] is able to do what he's doing today and be happy at what he's doing. And so now I feel that it is my turn to be able to search out where I'm going to be happiest. . . . [Yet] I can't quit my job because the money isn't there; it's just not. [It's a transition time], completely.*

The energy to make the change issued from her daily physical pain and was channelled into a program of studies in adult education, including the research course.

In all these cases, there was a slow burn of accumulating issues. The process of change was a much slower process in which the individuals could maintain control and security whilst forming new options. Nevertheless, this process still required an energy outside of the regular routine. For Sally, this energy came from her serious health issues and her empty nest:

> *[The courage comes] from the health issues, because you're forced, then, to step back and have a look at where your life has been, and you know that you've lived almost fifty years when this was diagnosed, and you'd like to think that life isn't over for you just yet. And what have I missed? And so some of the things I have missed is a good education, and so that's one of the things that I would like to pursue. . . . The more I did delve into it, the brighter the light came. And that's really what life is all about, is that growth, isn't it? And that learning, and that searching.*

Even though there was an accumulation of issues, the energy and courage almost needs to be "forced," as Sally said, so that one takes that step back and examines the shape of one's life. Often it is a "life in the face of death" issue that creates the energy to change, when maintaining the present patterns becomes unbearable.

So the desire for change was already present for most of the participants. They had engaged in enough reflection to name the issues that had accumulated to create the crossroad. Some simply came with their anxiety, some were searching for clarity, some were ready to take action, and some wished to push their change journey further. They were all standing within a transformative opportunity.

TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

> *I, the highest and fiery power, have kindled every spark of life, and I emit nothing that is deadly. . . . I, the fiery life of divine essence, am aflame beyond the beauty of the meadows, I gleam in the waters, and I burn in the sun, moon and stars. With every breeze, as with invisible life that contains everything, I awaken everything to life. . . . And thus I remain hidden in every kind of reality as a fiery power. . . . Through air and wind whatever is growing toward maturity is enlivened and supported, and in no way does it diverge from its inner being. (Hildegard of Bingen[1163]; as cited in Fox 1987: 8-11)*

All of the participants had woven a life of predictability and stability despite all the challenges they faced as adults. They had each established "normal" goals within a range of societal conventions and a routine to provide a sense of security and control. In this reality in Western societies, most individuals will face an accumulation of difficult adult experiences—but not every individual considers these experiences as a crossroad where they need to make a decision about another road to travel. Not everyone embraces the opportunity to enhance his/her consciousness of living patterns. This main highway of socially constructed patterns of living is often not questioned deeply until there is a rupture or the accumulation of enough disillusionment, fragmentation, and emotional/ physical pain to cause one to reexamine his/her chosen route.

For the participants who were standing at a crossroad, striving to understand the path they had come and where they should go next, they were embracing what can be considered a transformative opportunity. Each participant in his/her own way was contending with his/her internalized road map of White, Western, middle-class, able-bodied, heterosexual cultural expectations. These expectations defined what a "normal good life" is. Many of the participants had worked hard to materialize these expectations in their lives, yet a number of events brought important questions to the fore about taken-for-granted realities. In these cases, the questions that bubbled up could not be immediately gathered up and safely stored away or suppressed, for this is the nature of a transformative opportunity.

A transformative opportunity is like the spark of life that first-century mystic Hildegard described above. Events conspire to rejuvenate one's inner spark and kindle the consciousness for moving closer to one's inner being or essence. Disillusionment is a vital aspect of a transformative opportunity as it sparks the search for what is illusionary, what is meaningful, and what can kindle life-giving changes. Fragmentation is also a vital aspect of a transformative opportunity that continually impresses on individuals the reality of mortality and spawns the desire for a sense of wholeness. When participants entered the educational setting of this course, these experiences were mediated by the pedagogy employed. They had already an inner labyrinth in which they had been harbouring thoughts about disillusionment and worries about fragmentation. Entering this course was an overt symbol of the labyrinthian search.

PEDAGOGICAL MEDIATION OF TRANSFORMATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

As planned, the course pedagogy questioned the motivation behind dominant concepts of career development that strive to adjust and fit people into the demands of the global economy. It questioned the motive behind restructuring, perpetual job insecurity, and the appeal to a national competitive edge. Against these questions, the concept of sustainability was proposed as a concept that could address the desire for balance and making a difference. By contrasting the personal, community, and ecological aspects of sustainability against the modern scripts for living and working, possible new roads to travel were revealed and explored.

Each participant engaged with this pedagogical process according to the unique nature of his/her individual journey. However, a number of common responses emerged among the participants: retelling their life stories, building hope, experiencing heightened anxiety, facing fear, transforming cultural messages, clarifying life purpose and inner connectedness, and choosing and walking a new road. The remainder of the chapter tells the story of living through a transformative process. The first dimension of the process was the search for a deeper story that explained the journey to the crossroad.

Retelling the Old Stories

One of the first responses of the participants to the pedagogy was to rethink the path that led them to their crossroad in light of the introduced sustainability framework. They could not choose a new path forward until they listened deeply to their own story and found more encompassing explanations that made sense of the chaos, pain, and frustration in their journey. They sensed that there was a deeper purpose at work that they could not see, deeper rhythms within themselves operating without their conscious knowledge. As they began to record their journey through class exercises, their journals began reflecting a listening stance—a stance that was not just working out daily functional problems but that also paid attention to inner questions and emotions that to this point had remained submerged.

Kate

Kate and her husband had named financial independence as one of the priorities in their marriage partnership. Together with their frugal habits and professional achievements, they had achieved a stable financial situation after all their major acquisitions. However, after 12 years of professional work, disillusioned with her job and the parenting trade-offs necessary to keep it, it no longer provided sufficient purpose. With unsavoury new job tasks and a growing powerlessness to effect change, Kate's desire to try to make an important contribution was fading. Her work days were fragmented, she had little sense of accomplishment, and she carried her frustration and anger home. She was particularly concerned about her relationship with her children and the impact of her work and frustration on them. After discovering that her mother had Alzheimer's disease, she began pondering the reason for being at a crossroad. Her struggle early in the course was between two ways of knowing her own story. The first way, which was most common, was to trace the story at an analytical or informational level so that the psychological dynamics were revealed:

> *[The interview] got me thinking that perhaps my personal values are in conflict with my work which is making me so dissatisfied. Also thinking "why" I haven't made a change since I am probably in a financial position to do so. I think it comes down to my feeling that I have to contribute financially to our family or I am not "doing my part." I need to rethink and explore this. . . . I know I need to make a change because my work is not consistent with who I am, but I am a cautious person and I don't know what to change to. I am hoping this course will help.*

Here Kate began to realize that it was not just the lack of a clear role, lack of a sense of contribution, or even job duties unrelated to her training that were creating the dissatisfaction. She suggested that the deeper issue might have been an ethical conflict: Her personal values were incongruent with the values promoted at work. She further suggested that the reason that she was reluctant to leave her job was the cultural expectation that she ought to contribute to the family financially, a view expressed by many of the women participants. A week later she identified the key question that stayed with her throughout the course: "This thought process has also got me again questioning if what I do at work is consistent with what I value and what's important to me." Over the next few weeks she answered the question: "I think the answer is 'no.'. . . As I have progressed through my working life, I have progressively got further and further from my source of principles and values."

From this key reflection, Kate began to retell her story by elaborating on the deeper story of ethical conflict:

> *Two major things come to mind when I review my work experiences in terms of my assumptions about work. First, I think I have a very strong work ethic in that I need to feel that I am accomplishing something or achieving something when at work. The jobs I have enjoyed least are those where the people I worked closely with did not have a strong work ethic, and I couldn't see clear outcomes or results form the work I was doing. Perhaps this relates to my "source" of principles, where on the farm I grew up on there were clear results from any work done.*
>
> *The second thing that clearly stands out is that I prefer work that allows me to be in a service role where I can help people and provide them with resources or information to make things better for them. One could argue that this can happen in any job, but "helping" internal people in an office setting is not as*

> *rewarding to me as being able to "help" the public at large. I also assume that my work needs to have more of a purpose to me than just as a source of income. The 'point of work' part of the exercise was very helpful to me in recognizing this.*

In doing her work genealogy, Kate connected her need for results, achievement, and larger purpose from her farm childhood. This was her work ethic—achievement and service—yet she realized that this ethic was frustrated in her current workplace. When Kate considered her current work situation, she saw in detail how her value framework was being violated:

> *If you say you are going to do something, you do it. So dependability and responsibility . . . could be why I am having some difficulty in my current situation, because that is not how things are being run. . . . Everyone is responsible, and the result is that no one takes total responsibility.*

Working hard, dependability, and responsibility comprised her work ethic but not the ethic in her workplace. Slowly, as she listened to her own story, she moved deeper to process the experience at the affective level, where she *felt* with passion and compassion, not just *thought* about her journey:

> *This article describes exactly what I and many of my co-workers are experiencing—soulless work which is causing us all sort of problems such as tendencies towards depression. Our work is only providing us with money to buy goods and services. The other two purposes of work—to use and perfect our gifts and to do service to and in cooperation with others—are missing.*
>
> *A co-worker and I were just talking today about why we are not satisfied with our work. We don't feel like we are contributing or are needed. We are not doing "good" work. My question is, why? What is it about our work environment that is resulting in this? Is there any way it can be changed? Is our only option to find another work environment?*
>
> *I am hoping my "journey" in this course will help me sort out the answers to some of these questions. . . . I was very sad when reading it and thinking about how my work doesn't have anything to do with spirituality or the "soul." I particularly related to the "career culture," which leads to develop "false selves" that are nourished by career success and fed by the consumption for material goods. I have to ask myself, if I hadn't had a "setback" in terms of what I would call career success, would I still be buying into the "false self" scenario? If I was still progressing and feeling that I was successful in my career, would I be feeling the uncertainty and discontent I currently feel, or would it be masked by the external societal definition of success?*

> *I also was interested in the fact that women are more likely than men to question the whole corporate capitalism system. Is that why I am having such a difficult time explaining to my husband what I am going through at work? I don't think he understands what I am going through.*

This story is not just at an analytical level, but Kate *felt* the sadness and the loss she had experienced over the years in her work. The deepest pain was that she was not needed, not contributing. From this pain, she now recognized that the high ideals instilled from her childhood that she wished to activate through her work have been distorted through a career culture that fosters a self that is not true to her fundamental values. Until she experienced a setback in terms of career advancement, she did not realize that she was diverging from her inner framework. Only with the setback did the dissonance surface.

Most remarkably, Kate sought to understand what it is in the male corporate culture and in contemporary conceptions of success that results in soulless work. This question lingered with her throughout the duration of the course, when she contrasted quality of family life with corporate culture:

> *[The principles by which I live? Well,] family is the high one on the list, the importance of family and people in general, respecting people. I am not a particularly ambitious type of person or a business-oriented person. I tend to be more focussed on family and quality of life and that kind of thing. That is why I went down the road I did in terms of training. No, I am not on that road any more, not at work. I still do at home; I think we have achieved that. But by working, that is being sacrificed.*

She arrived at the conclusion that the work which ought to give expression to her values actually resulted in sacrificing her values.

Anne

Disillusioned because she found it difficult to infuse her deepest values into the health care system because of politics and a bottom-line profit ethic, Anne also reevaluated her reason for choosing her career. In her journal she contrasted her work principles and beliefs about the purpose of work with her current work situation. She was taught a sense of responsibility in which one ought to contribute to the community:

> *working to improve things and offer comfort, . . . leaving places better than I found them. In choosing nursing as a career, I adopted the idea of do no harm from a nursing perspective; . . . i.e., trying to learn how to be helpful to people without diminishing their ability to be in charge of their lives even as their health was failing (palliative care).*

She was also taught that hard work always pays off, if you do your best. Her grandmother taught her to enjoy whatever she did and to be creative by expressing her values and ideas through her work. She learned to achieve some sense of balance because she consciously looked for "enjoyment, . . . to see the bright side."

When Anne considered her work through the prism of these principles, she was torn between the positive and negative possibilities of realizing these principles:

> *I've always wanted to work [in nursing] for idealistic reasons. . . . I need the income like anyone else, but also because I believe in the importance of it. . . . I think I have followed a logical career path . . . into management. . . . [But] I was beginning to feel like, what I can get out of this? . . . There is a lot of freedom to do some things, and I know that I am part of the leadership that allows them to do it, . . . so it's not as simple as saying, "Get out; it's totally sick." . . . So therein is the conflict: this incredibly disillusioning pressure here [as well as] this ability to do some things that are right within my values over here. . . . We need to decide how can we work within this system that has values that are so different from my own.*

When she compared her management situation with her deepest principles of empowering others, working hard, being positive, and being creative, she realized that she was in a limit-situation. Although there was an intense ambivalence about her position, she said that leaving this job was not an option. Therefore, throughout her interviews she attempted to see the small spaces where she had made some impact. In retelling the story, she was able to separate her ethics from the ethics within which she found it necessary to work:

> *These things are recognizing the baby steps, . . . Rome wasn't built in a day, . . . and deciding, "No, there are some things wrong here, and that's okay. It's not good that they're wrong, but it's not my fault that they're wrong either. And I maybe can't change all the wrong stuff, but I can sure build on the right and try to not be so diminished by system things."*

By clearly making this separation and saying her truth, she was trying to ameliorate the sense of diminishment that comes with working in a large system.

Sally

In Sally's reassessment of her working life and her principles, she touched a chord that was very raw and painful. She continuously sacrificed her desires for a better education, resulting in work that lacked power and autonomy. By working hard and with integrity, she sought to be valued and to "be loved and rid myself of the feelings of abandonment." Through her work genealogy, she discovered that the cultural framework that structured her work life rested on certain learnings: (a) that without the degree or credentials she was not valued; (b) that to be valued she needed a high income level; (c) that long hours of work and caring did not guarantee that she could climb a ladder of success—that is, monetary success; and (d) that she was not a significant contributing worker, but was dominated by someone else:

> *I feel many emotions surfacing and can't help the odd tear trickling down. . . . Lacking a certificate or degree makes me feel devalued. I devalue myself through my own thinking and my own negative attitude. It is time to say good-night to the day and rest my body and my spirit, for today I've opened many little boxes that have been painful for me to do.*

In revisiting her ideas about work and the history of her working life, the experience of being dominated and undervalued was her painful but real story. Through this retelling of her story in terms of cultural illusions, she recognized that balance for her is "to be a significant contributing worker and to achieve respect and positive reinforcement from my colleagues." Sally then set two goals for herself: "to take some life for myself and to be empowered by my work." This was the first step of a significant transformation that occurred during her journey through the course.

In sum, the first response of the participants to the course material was to rethink their past and retell their stories in light of a new framework. Through a deep listening stance, the participants retold their stories at many levels: at an informational/analytical level, at a value or ethical level and, most deeply, at the heart or emotional level. In bringing to consciousness the principles that guided their work lives, they came to realize with great sadness and ambivalence that they did not have the efficacy to enact their ethics or their work principles. There is a significant grieving and sense of loss for what has not been. However, as the class began to visit individuals who had made sustainability a key element of how they worked and lived, new possibilities were revealed and hope was kindled.

Building Hope: The Witness of Mentors

Sally

After the work genealogies, the class embarked on several immersion or study tours that took them out into the community to visit individuals who had significantly transformed their working and living. Sally began to enrich her analysis from the study, tours and, to her surprise, she strongly affirmed the principles by which she lived:

> *All of the people that we visited value the work they do, and are guided by the principles of integrity as well as an inherent belief that they are either cooperating with planet Earth by leaving their living and working space clean and able to support and sustain the next generations, or are teaching other beings to be mindful of their own bodies and spirits in such a way as to be able to take responsibility for their own good health so they can heal themselves from disease, adversity, and anxiety. Many of the practices these people have been involved with I too have done for many years.*

Sally connected with the guest speakers by witnessing her values in practice by others. She saw what she desired: to work with integrity and self-valuing as well as with concern for future generations and personal health. Here Sally saw five models of how other people left life-depleting jobs and created empowering work. She also saw the different choices that 'credentialled' people can make, rather than the daily models in her workplace:

> *[The study tour] was great!!! It helped to replenish my soul and to realize that whether you're degreed, credentialed, certificated or not, people who are generally concerned about their fellow man are willing to voluntarily give up the conspicuous consumerism ideology. It has affected me to the degree that I'm reminded that I need to be proud of my accomplishments because highly educated people choose to live as I do: with integrity, choosing organic foods over the fast food garbage. It has helped me to become more clear about my own connections and directions.*

Sally saw how these individuals used their education and their privilege to do something of integrity rather than just to use it to purchase a materialistic lifestyle. Although their credentials gave them a choice, these individuals still chose to live a lifestyle similar to hers. This was immensely gratifying to her, and she began to value her way of living from a nonmaterialist framework. The purpose of the study tour was to simulate an immersion experience in which the participants entered a very different reality that could provide a stark contrast. Through it, Sally gained a clarity about different models of working with integrity. This contrast between existing work and the new models enabled Kate to see outside the box of known possibilities, beyond her limit-situation.

Kate

> *I found the study tour to be very "eye opening." I felt like I was in another world. The study tour presented many principles that I would like to add to my work life. . . . It broadened my scope of thinking and made me feel like I can have an impact in my community and the environment by the way(s) I choose to live and work.*

Although Kate had been profoundly disillusioned with her ability to make a difference through her work, she now had hope that she could indeed have an impact by transforming how she worked and lived. The study tour functioned to broaden her reference points that she used to filter her existing working and living habits. Although she identified with some of the speakers and had criticisms of other speakers, new options previously unconsidered now entered into the realm of possibility for herself and her family. Furthermore, she expanded her definition of the purpose of work and its role in her life:

> *Based on the study tour, my preferred relationship between living and working is to somehow "merge" them together. I think my quality of life would be enhanced if I [wasn't] forced to "punch a clock." This would provide more balance by removing the pressures associated with having to work at certain times which may conflict with "living."*

Kate identified the clock-punching nature of work in the industrial era and the forced separation of working and living. It is the separation of sites for working and living and the nonnegotiable hours of work which dominate and shape one's living. This separation is what kept her from honoring her other responsibilities, such as the freedom to be there when her young children needed her. Most important, she intuited that it was this separation that was primarily responsible for the fragmentation that she felt between work and home. In her expanded definition of good work, she moved beyond seeking only coherence between her beliefs and work practices:

> *In summary, "good work" for me is something that is consistent with who I am and what I believe; mindful of the natural world and my impact on it; part of a "community" of others with a common purpose; helping others better themselves, while at the same time allowing me to have a healthy body and attitude and quality life with my family.*

She now included considerations of the natural world, working with an intentional community, and doing helping work that enhanced her own health and quality of life rather than detracting from it. As she exclaimed in her journal, "Wow—sounds like a tall order!" Nevertheless, she now had established for herself what principles and structure of work she preferred and how that related to her quality of living.

Anne

Anne, too, was inspired by the study tour and the dramatic choices enacted by the speakers that held her own situation in stark relief. She was encouraged by work environments in which strong values can emerge. Witnessing these alternative work styles was a tangible and concrete way to learn that impacted on her at a visceral level:

> *I found the visits to be very inspiring, both from the point of listening to the commitment, integrity, and choices made by these people, and in my own thinking and reflection after being with them. I share many of their thoughts and was touched by the courage they each displayed in following their hearts. . . . The study tour was a helpful way to "feel" some of the concepts discussed in class. I found myself impressed with the dramatic lifestyle choices I encountered and immediately felt strengthened to look at small steps in my life. Truly reflecting on the broad issues of purpose for work and "does work fit with my values?" will be helpful in planning my next steps.*

Anne's hope was strengthened when she saw the value of taking small steps and recognized that, by pondering the purpose for work, she could find a way to move beyond her limit-situation.

Ky

Through the study tours, Ky was affirmed in the alternative direction in which she and her husband had been embarking, and she saw 'living hope' that limits can be transcended: "The study tour was interesting! enjoyable and thought-provoking. Proof that 'it *can* happen' if you dream it, bring it to fruition, and believe in yourself and what you are doing. We *can* make a difference." Ky was excited to witness individuals who believed in their values and were willing to enact them with conviction. As Ky and her husband were already on this road, this affirmation increased her courage and expanded her horizons further. She added the following principles to her already existing work principles: (a) There is a necessity to have a belief in yourself and that your values can be successful; (b) her role as "global citizen" was important—What can I do to "lessen the negative impact"? (c) there ARE alternatives; if you are ready to work hard physically and emotionally; (d) I must actively pursue new findings and attitudes; and (e) "working and living" should not be placed in separate boxes demanding very different persona to fulfill expectations. You have to live and work with integrity and honesty—with yourself and others.

Ky affirmed herself, her values, and the need for integrative changes. She confirmed that leaving a previously disillusioning work environment was a healthy choice: "I feel I have a high quality lifestyle now. I have a fairly flexible work schedule that allows me family and personal time." She wished to push her changes further by harmonizing her working and living and not accepting the fragmentation of industrial work and the fragmented identities that accompany it.

Through the study tour, the participants entered another world and witnessed how five individuals created work situations that enacted integrity and nonmaterialistic lifestyles. They contrasted their own working and living situations, and from this expanded their reference points about what was possible and what was preferable. Through the speakers, they also saw some aspects of their work and/or life being affirmed—the importance of relationships and health. They added new principles to their existent principles that could enhance their quality of life and saw the need for courage and faith to make important changes. Hope and new possibilities, however, were not the only impacts of the study tour on the participants.

The participants were very discerning in their observations of the study tour models and offered several critiques. They distinguished levels of conviction and integrity as well as depth of change among the mentors. They also identified kinds of work in which living and working could more easily be integrated. Even though the mentors had often left work structures that were too confining for the quality of life they desired, the central dilemma for the participants was their position in jobs or professions in which the integration would be hard to achieve. Dan's key insight was that the jobs most amenable to returning to an integrated state were those jobs that existed before the era of industrialized and professionalized work, such as farming and small business.

This, then, was the crux of the issue of working and living: How can work that is predicated on an industrialized and professionalized model be transformed into an integrated form, as anticipated by notions of sustainability? The resolutions at which the participants arrived during the course and in the two years after the course give testimony to where some of the spaces for change are and how a transition to sustainability can be made.

Heightened Anxiety

Although the study tours were vital for contrasting work structures and ways of living as well as for building hope and revealing new possibilities, the anxiety about change began to intensify. Late-night tossing and issue avoidance were Kate's experience of this anxiety:

> *I found the study tour to be a very worthwhile experience. . . . However, it has also created pressures on me to change my existing work and perhaps living, which I am finding difficult. I have spent sleepless nights composing resignation letters for my job in my head and having discussions with my husband, who is very concerned about our financial security. I even spent several days in what I think was avoidance of decisions I feel I must make to change my life, . . . perhaps because I am afraid of what I might see. I have also felt very tired and exhausted. I feel that I am at the point where I want to do something but can't because I need to carefully think about what it is I am going to do and the impact it will have on those I love.*

The study tour illustrated the need for change which she kept visualizing as a resignation letter. Yet, she felt blocked in making change manifested in weariness and indecision. Throughout the course, many of the participants alternated between feeling energized and rested or weary and anxious. Anne said:

> *At times I felt exhausted with all the thinking in my head. . . . This [course] has really hit something that is a need for me to work through. . . . I can't remember who said [the course] is like therapy, and it was! . . . I think because it was just so personal, and the thing that I didn't expect was the whole environment thing, because that's not an area that I'm strong in understanding or knowledge or behaviour.*

Anne grew tired from the depth of analysis that was required for transformational change, and many of the participants identified their own avoidance behaviours that surfaced periodically. In the midcourse interview, Gena was most vocal about her resistance even though she knew that it was normally highest just before a breakthrough. Her resistance was expressed in her feeling that the "whole environmental thing" was "pushed on me," that it was "not connecting":

> *I certainly felt overwhelmed with [the] pieces [of the course]. . . . You just pile on the stuff. . . . I want to say, "I get it," but I don't get it as in understand it, and how it all fits. . . . It just is that someone has changed the picture on me and that it's a big shift. . . . So now I'm asking all kinds of new questions, just leading to more trouble. . . . I mean, I'm taking everything apart. I look at that frame on the wall: Okay, how did they make that like so there's no waste products? . . . People look at me like I'm right out to lunch.*

The participants did not expect a course on the meaning of work and quality of living to incorporate an environmental analysis. The connection between transforming working/living and ecological integrity was not a connection that any of the participants would have made prior to the course. Inadequacy and guilt surfaced when they began assessing their lifestyles from a sustainability perspective. New questions that complicated their lives were resented. Throughout the study tour, Jennifer felt overwhelmed by the concept of sustainability and the pressure of the implications. Even the way she jotted these notes in her journal reflected her anxiety:

> *[I] can see the sense of sustainability concept, in the whole, feels almost overwhelming. . . . Incredible people who have made very different (different than mine) choices about their lives and how they live them. Overwhelmed feeling from my initial reaction that I need to evaluate all these aspects of my life and transform them NOW!!!*
>
> *Mulling over these ideas—which ones can work for me? [My] current work situation almost exactly opposes or is unharmonious with some of the stories. Many questions, thoughts spinning around in my head—not sure where it all will lead to, confused, overwhelmed, scared—talking about pushing myself and taking a big risk. . . . Visits yesterday stirred up guilt too—I am not doing much to reduce my impact on the planet.*

A broader horizon of possibilities and options both energized and inspired the participants. Yet, it also increased the level of anxiety as the breadth and depth of change was more than they had expected. Despite this, the participants did not exhibit a sense of paralysis or "frozenness" that would constrict the change process. In fact, the increasing level of anxiety and spinning ideas appeared to be a necessary precursor to important change. The new possibilities presented by the study tour appeared to be both a cause and an antidote for the increasing level of anxiety. For instance, although there were now more roads from which to choose that heightened anxiety, the hope and inspiration offered by the models made the anxiety manageable and gave some assurance that roads of integrity can be successfully walked. However, the sense of risk that they felt from the desire for change bred fear.

Facing Fear

Fear was one of the key emotions with which most of the participants struggled throughout the course. For Sally, fear was present even in her anticipation of the course, and she eventually came to recognize it as one of her life themes.

> *When I did come into the class, I was so scared. And then to be faced with all of these people who are so credentialled, and I don't have any of that. I thought to myself, "What am I doing here?" . . . But I am glad that I stuck it out; I feel really pleased about that. . . . [My] self-esteem just is nonexistent, or was at that time. . . . Fear, I think, is one of the biggest things that I have been taught all my life . . . for me, as on only child, "Don't make mistakes." . . . So the message [learned] is "face the fear."*

Transformation for Sally and for many of the other participants involved the need to face fear in order to take the risk of making change. There were many faces of fear: fear of failure or not succeeding in change, fear of the unknown or leaving behind familiarity, fear of making mistakes or taking the wrong road, fear of hurting loved ones, fear of inadequacy or lack of knowledge, and fear of losing status or being a pretender.

Kate wanted to cautiously address her fear—of taking the wrong road—by slowly and systematically analyzing the impact of a various options. She and her husband talked about many different combinations. She said:

> *Maybe we don't want to take any risk. I think both of us are just very much scared to change, scared of the unknown maybe or something, and I don't know why or where that comes from. But you see, I think what I need to do—and I know this—but I just have to do it, just make the break from the job. [This] is the main thing, and then go from there and have the courage and confidence that it'll work out, right?*

The central dilemma for Kate, then, is whether to take the risk of quitting her job of 12 years and trusting that it would all work out or finding a way to stay in the job. The intermingling of risk, fear, and caution, and yet knowing the need for courage and faith, are the elements that kindled her dilemma. She was of two minds and a divided heart. The dilemma for her was what kind of security was needed to take risks.

Jennifer indicated that the fear was just as potent if she chose to do nothing. Her reflections after the readings on 'good work' and the crisis in contemporary work are as follows:

> *This is pretty overwhelming stuff, puts in words some things long suspected. Scary if I don't do something—what will the future be like, what will be left to those left behind. Worry about future sets in, . . . another thing to worry about! Must work to realize that I am exploring the way/state of the world and work. More I learn perhaps, some actions I can take will become clear. Need to find a balance, where I can do something to make a difference—do not know what.*

Jennifer put her fear into a larger context, primarily in terms of future generations and the state of the world. In this context, the fear of doing nothing is just as great as the fear of changing. Nevertheless, it is still fear, and all of the participants began to develop life lines that would help them push through the fear. One was the shared hope among the participants that as they proceeded through the course, the road forward would look less fearful. This was the importance of having companions at the crossroad.

Transforming Cultural Messages

After the study tours, the participants engaged in an in-depth audit of their lifestyles. The first step was to connect money, life purpose, consumption, and work. With this audit, new concepts were introduced, such as sustainability, voluntary simplicity, ecological footprinting, bioregionalism, and dynamic balance. These concepts enabled them to put into perspective what their fears were and how they could transform dominant culture messages into life-giving messages.

Jennifer and Financial Security

After doing her audit of the amount of time she spent on work outside of actual work time, Jennifer was not surprised with the results.

> *The exercise about hours spent on work outside official work confirms what I have suspected for a long time. I spend a lot of time outside work thinking about work, and work impacts my time negatively. My time outside of work is not my own.*

When she calculated her actual wage, particularly the time and financial expenses related to her work, she exclaimed:

> *My hourly wage fell $16.87!!! It certainly indicates to me that I could live on substantially less money than I make now. . . . Now in order for me to really believe that I can make a change and still afford to live comfortably, I need to make sure I (we) have enough money to live. . . . I am struggling. I don't truly believe deep within me that I can make it; I am always worrying that in an instant it will all be gone. . . . Again I have almost an overwhelming fear of being overextended and the bottom falling out.*

In assessing the impact of her job in her life, she confirmed that her personal time was occupied by thoughts of work and that the expenditures related to keeping her job (work clothing, commuting, eating out, etc.) were major expenditures that reduced the money available for "living." Considering all the time and money invested in her job, her job dominated her life. Yet, her primary fear is for financial security. As the primary wage earner while her husband finishes university, she carried the worry that disaster would strike and leave them destitute.

Kate and Success

This worry of financial insecurity was carried by many of the participants irrespective of their actual financial status or their role as primary, secondary, or equal wage earner. Kate and her husband worried about finances and were working diligently to squirrel away enough money to retire early. Her audit demonstrated several key conclusions that related to her dilemma of whether or not to quit her job:

> *I spend almost as much time "on work" as I do at work. This is particularly disturbing because I do not spend much extra time directly doing work. Often times when doing things around the house or with my family I find myself preoccupied with thoughts about my job. . . . I discovered that my wage fell by appr. $20 an hour. Without my job, I could live on appr. $300 per week and free up 28 hours a week or 4 hours a day. Given these numbers, I would definitely say that my present employment is not worth it because I really do not enjoy it.*

Given that the time and money expenditures related to her job were so "invasive" and that their financial picture was stable, she had the statistical evidence she needed to make a decision about quitting her job. They were debt free, her husband had a good income, and these calculations demonstrated that she was making much less money than she thought. Yet, even with this convincing data, her reflections turned to the status of being "successful" through having a good-paying career:

> *The exercises we did in class to me reinforce an intuitive or "gut" feeling I have been having for quite some time. I have felt dissatisfied and "empty" about my life. I felt I had no "basis" for being unhappy because according to our societal definition I am very "successful." I see now that many are questioning this focus on "material" success. For several years I think I have "buried" some of my feelings to do what I thought was "right."*

Even though she had been successful in dominant societal terms, she felt empty about the status that this conferred. She looked back in time to see that, as a "career woman," she had regarded family concerns as "petty." There was a status to being able to say that she could not help with various school activities because she worked full-time:

> *These days I'm feeling more like it is my career that is "petty." I have "buried" a lot of my personal life for my work and am now finding it difficult to dig it up again. Now the task before me is to reclaim some of the other aspects of my life. It seems like it's just too much effort to really change, but I know I have to. Sometimes I think maybe I am just burned-out and need to take some time off to "heal" from my work and reclaim my life. However, at the same time I am reluctant to just quit my job until I see if there is a way to make it "work."*

Out of these exercises Kate critiqued the cultural messages regarding what is "success" as well as what is important and what is petty. In line with her fundamental values, she began to return to definitions of success that related to her family, particularly her children, and long-forgotten parts of her life other than money, status, and material accumulations. She desired to reclaim the buried parts of herself, but the energy was not yet accessible. She admitted, in the end, that it was not finances that blocked her change process, but the lack of another compelling direction.

Dan: Working Hard and Providing Stability

For Dan, these exercises challenged some of the fundamental messages to men about the purpose of work:

> *What you are bringing into question [is] the entire way men live their lives and were brought up: "Put your nose to the grindstone, work hard till you die, provide for your family." . . . You're making me question, or making us question, what we thought were core concepts, right? No, it isn't fun; it's very uncomfortable. It's like, well, what the hell have I been doing for the last 30 years?*

The cultural message that Dan identified, particularly for men, was not to question how much time, energy, or money your job costs you and to keep the trade-offs invisible. For all of the participants identified above, one of the key principles about work was to work hard as part of your responsibility to your family:

> *The question of whether or not my present employment is worth it in other ways is very interesting to me. Part of the reason I have stayed at my present job as long as I have is that it gives me the monetary return and security to look after the more important things in my life; namely, my children and my relationship. My WASP upbringing has pounded into my brain that fact that you take care of your obligations first (family) and then worry about other things (challenging, rewarding work). If you got both, that was simply a bonus.*

Yet, what are the limits around working hard, particularly if it means giving more and more time and energy to the job and making important family sacrifices? And what is success if you lose your marriage, as Dan did?

In his search for balance, Dan started to make connections between time and money that yielded surprising conclusions. He realized that one of his strengths was that he spent very little time after work thinking about or doing work at home. He began to ponder the possibility of a job in which the line between work and home was not so rigid: " Perhaps an ideal job would be a better blend of home and work instead of home versus work." Through an audit of his time, he discovered that it was shift work that dictated the rhythm of his home life and was the reason for his feeling unbalanced:

> *Now for the illuminating part. It is precisely because of this rotation and change of ratios [as primary caregiver for the children] that I feel so unbalanced. One month I can pour vast amounts of time into developing and strengthening my relationships and myself, and one month later my energies must be refocussed on my children. . . . Funny and important thought: I've gone my entire adult life making adjustments in my life to fit my work, when all along I should have been making job adjustments to accommodate my life.*

Suddenly, Dan shifted his framework by critiquing why he had continually adjusted his home life to his work. He concluded that this was backward and therefore all the facets of his life grated against each other.

Even with this new insight about his lack of balance, he justified his job using other dominant cultural messages illustrating the connected nature of these messages:

> *The question of changing jobs is one I struggle with a lot since it is not just me taking a leap of faith, . . . but rather me and two young children taking this leap. . . . Do I have the courage to take that leap? Do I have the right? . . . You can probably tell that my spirit wants to make the change, but it's battling with my brain.*

Dan stated repeatedly that he enjoyed the people at his worksite and felt some obligation to stay for these individuals. However, the most compelling reason for staying in his present job was the traditional male responsibility of bringing in the income for his family, no matter how he felt about his job. Dan has been the financial stability in his family while his wife explored various jobs. Now, after the divorce, the pressure for stability was intensified given that he was the primary parent. Parallel to this breadwinner responsibility is the responsibility of providing a stable environment for his children. Changing jobs is perceived as irresponsibility by putting self first and therefore creating an unstable environment. Although he said that the spirit was willing, the faith and courage to make the change did not outweigh the traditional messages of responsibility and stability at this point.

However, through the "real wage" exercise, Dan began to see the glimmer of a new possibility that he had never considered previously in light of the "work hard until you die" cultural message:

> *I was struck [when] mine fell in half—my wage to my real wage—50%. . . . You know, if I'm a gentleman and I realize that my wage is only half of what I take home, or whatever the case, then I'm going to have to make a decision as to whether or not to change careers. . . . To be quite honest with you, since taking this [course], I thought maybe I could live the life I want and only work part-time, you know, and have more time for my friends and have more time for the things I want.*

The "hard, cold" financial facts were another strand in the web that required a clear-eyed assessment. Dan concluded that perhaps it was not the particular job that was the problem, but the amount of money expended to keep the job. His real wage was much lower than he expected, and this challenged the message that you have to work full-time to be a responsible person. He determined that he could work part-time and still net the same amount of money, as well as free up the time for his relationships. This could also address his sense of fragmentation and assist in his goal of achieving material simplicity.

The connection finally "clicked" when one of the co-instructors introduced the notion of shifting from material wealth and social adequacy toward material adequacy and social wealth. This transformation in Dan's thinking was evident in the sequential entries in which he moved from "lack of passion" to an "epiphany":

> *Will this stuff ever click? I mean, I listen to what Myles says, and I understand it, and the need for recycling, environmental concerns. But it just doesn't click in my heart or my soul. Do I just not care? I see the passion that people like Myles feel, but their passion is not my passion. I sometimes think that it will take an epiphany for me to connect to these issues.*
>
> *Now here's a topic that I can connect to—social wealth vs. material adequacy. In a few short words, Myles managed to sum up exactly what I'm trying to reach. I want more time to build on my friendships and relationships. I want to decrease all the clutter in my life. I want a simpler, more financially stable life. My friends and family are the most important parts of my life. It's time I gave them the honour and attention they deserve.*

Dan's epiphany was shifting to a different framework of life meaning. He entered the course struggling with the material-wealth message of the dominant culture and intuiting that the path forward lay in material simplicity and spirituality. Now, he had the concept that wove together a new framework for the path he was searching:

> *I had already started to ask myself many of the questions these articles raised. What the articles on consumption and simplicity did was, firstly, give a name to what I was struggling with and, secondly, give validation to many of the conclusions I was coming to. The concept of ownership of things being a chore, and that more doesn't always mean better.*

Dan found the concept that could animate his desire for change. Sally also found that this section of the course fundamentally shifted her thinking about her work status.

Sally and Status

> *I think the most significant was the mind opening thought that you can separate your work for pay from your true work. That to me was astounding! . . . Because it freed up the thought that I don't have to identify myself by what it is that I'm doing. That my work for pay is not me. That I can have other things that are more meaningful for me to do, that can identify who I am and what it is I am. . . . Why did I think this had to define me? . . . And walking into that classroom and listening to everyone's identifying themselves by this kind of profession or that kind of profession, . . . well, I'm just as good as the rest of them.*

Sally identified the dominant cultural message that social status is attached to professional training and associated income. Given her lack of professional training and low income, then, she identified herself as "one of the least" in society. The freeing thought for Sally was that she did not need to tie her sense of identity to this social status.

In fact, as she continued to read and explore concepts, she went further to link high income and status with ecological destruction.

> *In this session of revaluing consumption and ecological footprinting, I was most surprised to discover that the more affluent a person is, the more Earth's resources are used to satisfy the wants of the rich. It amazed me to find out that the amount of land required from nature to support the average Canadian's present consumption is over 4.2 hectares of land.*

Her shift was seeing the negative impact of affluence and the irresponsibility that it symbolizes in terms of ecological and social sustainability. She described the power of this understanding as 'seeing for the first time' after being blind:

> *It was like scales falling from my eyes. The support of the ecological footprinting information gives me power to think of my work for wages in a more positive light and to know that the affluent people in the latest fashion styles are robbing other human beings of the basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing.*

Sally took this assessment of affluence one step further to apply it to her work site. Within this new framework, then, her status rose, whereas the status of the affluent falls:

> *The place that I work has people who are in the teaching field that dress to the nines every day. Every day I see the children who come from families that are poor. I see the children who come with holes in their socks that their feet stick out of. I see the families whose children come to school without any lining in their shoes, they're just walking on plastic. And I see the teachers coming dressed to the nines. So when you go to work, and you see all the finery with people who are your colleagues, so to speak, dressed in the finery, it's not a comfortable place to be. The disparity between the worker at the bottom and the worker at the top is too great. The disparity among the children is great. It's sad to me to see the finery, the jewels hanging off the neck, the material adequacy; I mean, it's more than adequate. I think to myself, in the book that I read, you are taking up 12.6 acres of resources to hang that thing around your neck. And what does that say to the little child that they're with? It's painful to watch it going on. And they don't see it.*

Here Sally connected class injustice in Canadian society with ecological destruction. Conspicuous consumption not only represents the inequality between teacher and student and teacher and teaching assistant, but it also is irresponsible use of natural resources. From this viewpoint, Sally began to value her lifestyle for the ecological and social integrity that it enacted:

> *What I have been missing is the clarity of convictions; my beliefs that although I don't have a degree or 'professional career' I have focused my energies in raising my three children, providing them with organic food stuffs, and*

> *supplementing the family income so my kids would have what the others did; i.e., that conspicuous consumerism. . . . [Now] I will add to my work life a clear conviction that what I do in my work life has value because I've raised three wonderful people who are successful contributors to society and not polluters of society. I will no longer 'envy' others for their fashion statements, their manicured nails, or exotic holidays; in short their conspicuous consumerism. Because I have seen others—far more educated that I—choosing to live in a way that will sustain the Earth for others who follow after us. But what I have gotten caught up in is the 'envy' and 'comparison' and long, long hours of hard hard work—never taking the time for myself.*

In affirming her lifestyle for its ecological and social integrity, Sally saw that her work of real value was her mothering and conscientious attention to quality food and good values. In her envy of affluence, however, she worked too many long hours in the search to provide her children with the goods that would ensure that they were accepted according to the material standards in society. She realized that she had been pursuing conspicuous consumption with deleterious effects on her health.

Kate and the Comfort of Consumption

Kate also suggested that it is the importance of money and the consumption it can buy that has derailed her purposes for work over time and infiltrated even some of her parenting habits. Consumption appears to be a benign activity in our society and is used for comfort and to demonstrate love, particularly for children:

> *I am also starting to think more consciously about the messages we are passing onto our children about materialism and money. This really hit home for me this weekend when my eight-year-old son had a friend over. This friend proceeded to tell us how he had his own computer, TV, VCR, and video games in his room. That night my son started talking about how he wanted video games and a CD ROM. A good real-life example of how consumerism and "keeping up with the Joneses" is such a big part of our society. It's difficult to deny children those sorts of things when their world is pressuring them.*

Through an audit of habitual and addictive consumption or consumption due to reasons such as peer pressure or boredom, all the participants realized how much consumption had become a measure of their worth, a comparative show of their "style," a means to show love, a form of entertainment, as well as a comfort activity. Like Kate, they realized with shock the unconscious messages they were teaching their children, especially when there was no financial reason to deny children their wishes. Like Kate, many of the participants came to understand that their search was learning to meet these emotional and social needs in nonmaterial ways:

> *I have just been thinking that perhaps I should go shopping and get some new things and it would make me "feel better." Likewise my husband and I have been talking about finishing the basement in our house and redoing the carpets, etc. Again somewhere inside I think that will make me feel better. Now I am not so sure—CONSUMPTION MAY NOT BE THE ANSWER. More importantly, I need to work out my life so my needs are met internally rather than trying to meet them externally through consumption.*

The power of this part of the course was uncovering the interlocking nature of cultural messages. Each of the participants highlighted his/her desires for financial security, success, working hard, stability, status, and comfort. Although the audit of their lifestyles—their time, money, and work—was powerful in and of itself, each of these facets was not enough to provoke change. All of these messages are compelling, but as an interlocking set of messages they are overwhelming in their power to block change. Each message had its own rationalization which would kick in if another rationalization was no longer shown to have legitimacy.

To probe under these messages even more deeply, the participants were encouraged to clarify their life purpose. As Kate and Sally suggested, only a sense of life purpose would help to quell the lure of conspicuous consumption, conventional success, money, and status.

Clarifying Life Purpose

Kate and Retrieving Professional Ideals

Kate was hoping that the activities around life purpose would help clarify a new direction. At first, she was not sure that finding her life purpose was possible, particularly given that she "has been a great one for doing what pleases others, often at the expense of my own needs." This, she said, confuses her ability to figure out "what my *true* purpose is." As she pondered this, she made the following statement:

> *At this point in time my life purpose is to dedicate myself to helping others and in particular nurturing my family with commitment, respect, and humbleness while ensuring that my life choices are not detrimental to my community or the ecosphere. In order to do this I must continue to learn and develop personally and maintain my physical and mental health.*

Kate had integrated her negative learnings about her present job as well as her original ideals from her professional training into this statement. Most important, she set learning and health goals that were interim steps to finding a concrete initiative that expressed her purpose. As she continued her reading and reflection, her thinking was crystallizing as to a new direction that wove in the threads of her profession that she had neglected:

> *The other thing I am finding as I read some of these materials is that I feel a strong connection to my training in the home economics profession. I feel a need to become more closely aligned to my profession and some of the work that is being done on issues such as security of food supply and international development. It is interesting that I think I have "rejected" my profession to some degree because it did not "fit" with the "corporate world" and seemed to even hold me back to some degree. Now I am starting to shift my thinking and think perhaps my background may have an important role to play in where I head from here.*

Again, Kate identified the compromises that she made to adjust to the values of the corporate world. In order to be "respected" in the corporate world, she saw her mothering concerns as petty and her profession as low status. She was retrieving the original ideals in her profession that energized her previously. Excited about the new integration of ecology and new views of economics in her profession, she desired to reclaim her professional connection as a way to reformulate her work.

Sally and True Work

Sally also identified the same issue of tying up self-respect and worthiness with the status of one's job. She applied a caste/class analysis from her reading in two ways: first to her paid work, and to her unpaid work or what she now called her "true work" or vocation of mothering. Although she entered the course with low self-esteem and self-effacement in relating to the other participants, her sense of inner power was increasing as she was affirmed from within a different framework of values:

> *I quote from the reader. "Along with racism and sexism, our society has formed a caste system based on what you do for money. We call that jobisms, and it pervades our interactions with one another on the job, in social setting and even at home. Why else would we consider housewives second class citizens?" Amen!! This statement had a huge impact on me as I read and helped me to feel more powerful. . . . Now I can place a new value to my life purpose because it does not*

> *have to be related to what I do to make money to put food on the table, or buy the children their boots.*

Sally no longer has to be apologetic for her dedication to mothering or for her low-status and low-income job. Reconnecting with her own integrity and affirming the values by which she had made all her decisions were healing her spirit, decreasing her fear, and increasing her energy for change. Moreover, she has touched her innermost self, with its many protective layers, which is necessary within the structural violence of a societal class and caste system:

> *This whole class/course experience has been so good for me because it has helped me to finally and truly identify some of the very mixed up feelings that I have been having. . . . It is causing me to examine my spirit to look deep within, peel away the crud, to find beating within me a heart of kindness.*

The course provided a safe space for Sally to repair her self-esteem and allow her courage and compassion to grow. It is difficult to exert compassion and an openness to the pain in society when one feels daily the injustices of a caste system. She was affirming her humanness and her capacity to love as the source of her worth. She was affirming the integrity of her work despite its position in the caste system. She named clearly the vocation to which she had been committed, thereby drawing a clear distinction between work which is paid for and that which is part of her true work. She was now consciously looking for a new expression of her lifelong vocation:

> *What I need to add to my work life is a new vocation to take the place of the vocation of 'Motherhood.' This is a profound realization for me. . . . That was my vocation, and I lost sight of that in the hurry and scurry of life, . . . and some of that is attaining material things and some of it is just keeping one's head above water. . . . And within that new vocation I will add the new dimensions of a 'healthy spirit realm.' I have been trying this out somewhat but it has never been as clear to me before as it is now that a healthy spirit can bring about a healthy body and mind.*

Her vocation was lost in the whirlwind of daily activity that so many discussed. She got lost in the striving and accumulating, not realizing that she was losing more than she was gaining. She got lost in her despair as she tied her worth as a person to her pay cheque. Retouching her vocation was a spiritual endeavour, for to live out one's vocation is to live out one's spiritual purpose. It is this spiritual purpose that maintains one's physical, emotional, and mental health, the health she had lost as she lost her sense of purpose in the midst of strong countervailing messages. This does not comprise a transformation, but rather concurrently stimulated a restoration of her principles to their rightful and conscious place:

> *The principles really are not new. What is new is that I have never thought of them in a clear purposefully focused way. The principles of "good work" for me would be a vocation that I can give my life to—that special calling that says "Ahhh, I'm glad you've arrived to do that which you called do do"—and a balance of being able to enter into and leave the work, to have that flexibility, and a clear knowledge that what I'm doing has a direct positive impact on others that can be reflected back to me in the lives of other's achievements. I would like to be my own boss, able to affect actions or change situations that are compromising or unethical.*

Good work for Sally is consciously working within her sense of vocation, knowing that she is flowing with her spiritual purpose. She knew that when this occurred she would see a reflection of herself, of her presence in the world. She would know that she had made a difference. This is the essence of what it means to be balanced, for then she would have the power to speak truthfully and to act ethically. Although the specific niche for this is not clear, she knew the nobility of being in the world in such a way: "To dedicate myself to something noble and worthy would be great, but I don't know what that noble and worthy would be. I need to direct my life toward greater contributions to make the world a better place." One can sense that Sally's spirit was soaring, for she had touched her inner power. She had put her life in the context of contributing to a better world, although the shape of the next step was not yet clear.

Dan, Ky, and Jennifer: Spiritual Growth

Dan also felt that a major aspect of his life purpose was related to nourishing his spirituality and, as such, called for spiritual growth. After his father died 20 years ago, he asked the life purpose questions. Initially, he thought his life purpose was to be the "good little soldier" and weather through all the obstacles. As time went on, he understood it as the idealized American family, but he said that he felt as though he were living in a fog:

> *The point I am at in my life now is one where principles mean much more to me that material things. My principles have always been very important to me, even from an early age, and I carried them with me through my life. Lately however, [one] principle which I need to focus on [is] spiritual growth. But not in a Western organized religious sense. But rather a feeding and nourishing of my soul as well as my body. In conclusion, my purpose in life is to be the most*

> *complete me I can be, to live the ideals I believe in, to have a calmness or oneness with the world.*

Dan did not believe that he had a greater purpose beyond living an honourable life. An honourable life for him was manifesting his ideals, growing into the power of his inner being, as Hildegard described it, and sharing that with those he loved. It is a mystical sense that there is an ability to live a sense of oneness. This oneness in a Buddhist understanding is where the self as ego occupies much less space and acknowledges the oneness in all things, where time is no longer linear and where space is no longer just three dimensional and related only to human history. Quantum physicists such as Einstein and Bohm, Buddhists, and Christian mystics all share this manner of viewing the world—through the eyes of peace and oneness. This is Dan's search that will enable him to live with balance.

Ky echoed Dan when she described her sense of fulfillment:

> *Fulfillment seems to involve a feeling of inner harmony, congruence, accomplishment, peace, . . . balance, . . . a time when the inner core is in tune with the outer realities; . . . the parts of my being (spiritual, physical, emotional, rational) are in sync. These times vary in depth and effect and can occur at very different times. The outer and inner worlds mesh in harmonious ways.*

Balance was no longer described by the participants as allotting equal time to doing all the tasks at work and at home. Rather, balance was more about the congruence between their inner and outer worlds. It was a shift from balancing all the demands of a material-focussed life to a spiritually focussed life, a life that appreciates mystery and awe. As Ky suggested:

> *I think the [spiritual] foundation was there [as a child]; then you sort of leave it. . . . All of a sudden maybe it's that whole mystery and the wonder of when you have children. . . . I feel like I'm going on a journey and maybe going up some stairs . . . [to] more understanding of what life is about. . . . [It is a shift toward the spiritual] and away from the whole material idea. I now plan on a plan.*

Ky saw the pull of the material as diverting her attention to the unfolding of life as a spiritual journey. It is not just doing and accumulating; it is a sense of how one stands in the world and how one regards the events in one's life. She could not see the end of the journey, but the plan was the sense that there was a metaphysical or divine plan to the journey. Jennifer shared this sense of being on a journey as well.

> *Where I am at [is] different since beginning—asking and thinking about THE BIG QUESTIONS—life purpose—what is it I am meant to do. . . . I've started on a journey, on a road. I can't see far along it. It has many hills, twists, and turns. I will come to spots difficult to negotiate and others where it is difficult to keep from racing downhill. The journey will not end with the end of this course—it may not even really take flight—but I have started; I wonder; I think and I explore. . . . What decisions? Where will it lead? What will I do?*

The journey is an inner journey as well as an outer journey with many pragmatic questions. Yet, there was less anxiety for Jennifer now: a willingness to wait, a willingness to look differently, a willingness to wonder at it all.

Although the participants were skeptical of trying to determine their life purpose "on demand," they were able to derive statements with which they felt comfortable at this particular moment in time. For some of the women, determining their own purpose was difficult, given their desire to please and meet others' needs to the point of being unfamiliar with their own needs. Nevertheless, like Kate, some of the participants were able to retrieve the professional ideals that originally animated their sense of mission in their work. Their ideals had slowly been lost in the realities of bureaucratic organizations and as corporate valuations made their impact. They also wove in new concerns about respecting all their relationships, including those with the ecosphere and their communities.

Like Sally, many of the participants found the concept of true work to be a powerful concept that distinguished between what they did for pay and the worth of Earthly life. Although what they did for pay may be a worthy part of their true work, it was only a small portion. This then affirmed the time and concern they spent outside of work in their relationships and involved in their communities. They no longer had to value all of their activities by the monetary return or status. Many of the participants realized just how low a status caring for their relationships was in the dominant cultural arena. Determined to change this message, the participants developed a courage that would take them beyond the pull of these messages.

Moreover, the participants restored their work principles and ethical beliefs to a conscious focus that would guide their decisions and their speech. They saw their life purpose in a spiritual context. The growth of their inner being meant that they could eschew the empty promises of conventional success, status, and security for an inner, spiritually focussed sense of success, status, and security. The derivation of life purpose assisted in replacing the conventional messages with a new vision, new principles, and a sense of internal balance. From this issued an openness to the surprises along the journey of life. This openness was a major shift that required nourishment for it to grow.

Inner Connectedness

A deliberate aspect of the pedagogy was to offer activities and reflections that would facilitate organic[35] and spiritual connections. The organic and spiritual were considered as interlocking realities in which organic connections would lead to a sense of the sacred. Inner spiritual connections would lead the participants to engage with the restorative properties and the living models of the natural world. These connections were considered as nourishment for the participants as they journeyed a difficult path with many "hills, twists and turns."

Organic and Spiritual Reconnections

A common observation by the participants was that their sense of balance was restored when they were outside in a wild, natural area. The solitude and quiet offered a natural reflective circumstance and the chance to hone a mindfulness of one's surroundings. Kate discovered, in her search to find wild spaces in which to walk, that the spaces were disappearing and their integrity was being compromised by human habits:

> *I always feel more in "balance" when I am out walking and thinking by myself. The fall colors of the leaves were wonderful. I get a sense of peace and contentment when I am close to nature that I don't find in my hectic life. I was somewhat upset because one of the few "close to nature" places near my home has been developed into condos. . . . I can't stand it when people throw around litter like that—it makes me very angry.*

Kate immediately sensed peace when she was in a wild space and realized that in a hectic life these moments are rare. Making the time to slow down and be reflective is not a normalized cultural habit. The connection with the natural world was one forged when she was a young child, and to return to it is to return to a more peaceful time. She developed an image of balance that expressed this original connectedness:

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[35] Organic is used here to mean in relation to the natural world or the characteristics of an organism.

> *Finally settled on a stream as the "correct" image for me. A flowing stream—peaceful—there are corners and it's not all smooth but it continues flowing. A few interesting things about this image—it was blue, my favourite color when I was young. I used to go and sit by the creek near our home to think and meditate. I need to incorporate more time for nature and meditating into my life in order to sustain me!*

The sense of balance for Kate came from two sources—a connectedness to the natural world that restored her and an interrelatedness with time for meditation and reflection. She knew that these were sustaining activities for her, but again she had been distanced from these given the pace of her life. After a restful and reflective weekend that incorporates meditation and organic connectedness, she felt "centered," which gave her the energy to address the issues in her work:

> *Feeling more "centered" this morning. . . . I am feeling less stressed and more in "control" or at least willing to admit there is something greater in "control" than me. I even feel quite well rested, which makes me not dread going to work quite so much as usual. Makes me wonder if maybe I can manage this job "thing" if I change my personal life to become more "in touch" with myself and aware.*

When she was centered and rested, her life felt more controlled; but not necessarily by herself, but as trust in a greater force that gives meaning to the events. She wondered, if she remained centered, whether the ability to withstand the issues on her job site would be increased. She toyed with the idea that an attitude adjustment was all that was needed to help withstand her job:

> *I mentally told myself that I had to put things in perspective and it was only a job and maybe I was expecting too much out of it. I actually was almost looking forward to going to work for the first time in a very long time. However, once I got there and started working on projects, etc., I became more and more frustrated. . . . Now if I am not supposed to get my meaning and purpose out of work, [the lack of vision and dissatisfied people] shouldn't matter, but it does—it bother me and upsets me. I keeping coming back to that I would like to just quit my job, but then what would I do?*

Kate was trying to transfer the mindfulness strategies into her work life, trying to see the small joys and not ascribing so much importance to her job. However, she became aware that there is a limit to mindfulness as an accommodative strategy, for the issues run much deeper than positive thinking; they concern the integrity of work.

Through provided awareness exercises, Kate was also developing a heightened awareness of deeper rhythms in her life. In particular, she touched the sensuality of everyday life, which gave her much delight:

> *The taste of water is cool and refreshing—especially after a walk or some exercise. The best water I have ever tasted is when it comes out of a stream in the mountains when hiking. An apple is crispy, cool and refreshing—especially the first MacIntosh apples in the fall. You bite into them and the "snap" and the juice runs out of your mouth because you take such a large bite. Supper tonight was homemade turkey noodle soup that was frozen after Thanksgiving dinner. The broth was full of the goodness of the turkey meat and the bones that were cooked for hours to get all of the goodness out. Added to the broth were fresh, flavourful carrots from our little garden, onion, and lots of noodles. The soup was especially enjoyable after our long hike outside and warmed me through.*
>
> *These "gifts" of food and water all come from mother nature—and the closer they are to nature (water from a mountain stream, carrots fresh out of the garden, apples picked off the tree), the more enjoyable they are, because I feel more "connected" and grateful for them. I am fortunate to have had life experiences growing up on a farm and hiking in nature that make me more aware of the origination of our food. This course and the materials in it have made me more conscious of the natural abundance in my life and I am grateful of that.*

Kate was returning to a mindfulness of simple pleasures such as the taste of water or fall apples. Now, however, she made the connection between the goodness of her food and water with its place of origin. This is a bioregional sensibility which values that which was produced by her own hand or was received from her immediate environs. She asserted that the closer the connection between the production and consumption of food, the more enjoyable they are and the more a sense of goodness pervades the act of physical sustenance. The sense of place which harbours a love of place—whether for her little garden or mountain streams—was restoring Kate to a personally historical as well as regional connectedness.

Most significant is the sense of abundance that issues from mindfulness that further evokes gratitude. Without mindfulness, a sense of natural abundance would not exist to replace a sense of material abundance. Material abundance is purchased, and therefore gratitude is not an ongoing dynamic. Only when natural abundance is observed and viewed as a gift from the Earth does gratitude flow; hence, the gratitude is ascribed to a greater source. Another example reflected in Kate's writings was tuning the senses to seasonal changes:

> *Last weekend when I first walked down to the lake from the cabin I felt a warmth coming off the water. It was still and quiet except for the sounds of the birds. I could hear the leaves dropping off the trees behind me. The next morning it had frozen hard. When I walked down to the lake the sand was frozen and crunched underfoot. There was an eerie mist rising from the water on the horizon. I could hear the swans in the distance and a breeze blew the leaves off the trees. I am so grateful that my family and I can enjoy the beauty of the lake and have seen it through the seasons of Spring, Summer, and Fall.*

She treasured the times when she could rest and be still in the natural world. A borrowed cabin became a symbol for her of the balance and beauty that she sought. It also put her in touch with the seasonal changes that would be less noticed in an urban environment. Such stillness, beauty, and seasonal connection were folded into the experience of cabin living as living simply:

> *It's Sunday today and I am sitting in front of a fire in the cabin at the lake even though we have shut the water off and there is no central heat other than this "not very efficient fireplace." The kids are busy coloring and painting and singing and keeping themselves entertained. Several times this weekend it has occurred to me that the reason we enjoy it so much out here is that it allows us to experience a small taste of voluntary simplicity*

In cabin living and on her days off, Kate settled into a more organic sense of time when she passed the time without any pressing places to be. Her young children also helped her into a slower time sense that carried over into wanting to be with her parents in an unhurried way:

> *This morning I felt like I was rushing my daughter a lot, right? "Okay, we have to get dressed; we have to do this and this." . . . But it was Friday, and we're supposed to just kind of hang out Friday morning in our jammies until noon. . . . I think that really [is] giving me clues. And the thing with my Mom, . . . I want to be able to be there for my mom and dad, to be able to spend some time there and work some things through.*

In contrast to these natural sounds and rhythms that she experienced at the cabin or with her loved ones, she compared the sounds in the city that normally filled her ears, sounds that felt disconnected from anything "real":

> *The sounds of my workplace are outside downtown traffic, telephones ringing, the buzz of fluorescent lights and the hum of computer equipment. Occasionally I hear people's voices but they are often talking about obscure business things instead of anything connected to real life. At home I hear the TV, my children laughing and talking, the dishwasher, washer and dryer. After I want to turn off the TV because I find it very distracting and annoying. My favourite sound at home is my kids talking to each other first thing in the morning when my husband*

> *and I are in bed and they don't think we can hear them. I enjoy the sounds of people and voices but find that the traffic and household and office equipment makes me anxious and unsettled. I am thankful for the simple sounds of people talking and laughing in our complex mechanized world.*

Kate contrasted the simple sounds of people and the natural world with the mechanical sounds that normally surrounded her. This simple sensory mindfulness illustrates another source of fragmentation, anxiousness, and unconnectedness that is felt in daily circumstances. She also identified the lack of connectedness implicit in the simple matter of work clothing:

> *I like my clothing to feel like it is part of me. When possible I like to wear cotton garments because they are more comfortable than most synthetic fibres. I feel more "in touch" at work when I wear more comfortable clothes. Every Friday we used to have a casual day when people would dress more comfortably. I used to really look forward to it and felt it helped us to get to "know" our co-workers better. Management decided that we could no longer have our casual Fridays, but since then I try to dress more for comfort than how I think people expect me to look at work. I am grateful that I have discovered the importance of personal comfort and comfortable clothing to my well being.*

Clothing has become a boundary between people to ensure professionality, or rather distance, and to camouflage who they really are. Human connectedness in such simple ways is discouraged in the workplace, yet Kate identified it as an issue of well-being. Therefore, layered under the clothing issue and mechanical sounds that permeate modern living is the very nature of how modern life is structured for disconnectedness.

In contrast to this pervasive disconnectedness, Kate pondered the time of most balance for her, and it was those times when there was an intense connection. This connection was not just an organic connection with the natural world; she also defined it as an organic connection with her loved ones:

> *At these times when I felt I could be totally "connected" to my kids I felt "balanced." It is also interesting that there was always only me and one of them present . . . to give my undivided attention. The other moment of balance I recall is when my friend and I were discussing work and he was talking about all the extra time he was putting into his job—I felt "balanced" because my efforts were more focussed on my family. . . . What do these observations of balance and imbalance tell me? That what is really important to me is spending quality, one-on-one time with my children, and things that take away from that are imbalance.*

Kate was learning for herself that balance was times of intense connection—both with the natural world, with her inner spirit, and with her loved ones. Activities and priorities that caused disconnection were the factors that created a sense of imbalance. Just as she was expanding her concept of balance, so had her concept of sustainability expanded by incorporating these external and internal components:

> *I think [my definition of sustainability] has [changed] in the sense of relating it to self and almost like emotional and spiritual needs. I think, originally, sustainability to me was kind of the whole environment thing—to put it in a nutshell. And I think now I see a real link between things like community and family and how we choose to do things and that kind of thing. . . . Previously, I think I saw it mostly as physical [as in physical use of stuff], whereas I think now I see there's also that sort of social-emotional component in terms of just people and relationships.*

Through the personal dimension of sustainability, Kate was now intricately involved with the concept of sustainability and related to the term on several levels. Not only was the internal related to the external, but she also understood the term as incorporating the relationships between self, family, community, and broader social dynamics as well as the physical world. Reestablishing all these connections then became part of the definition of sustainability as Kate now understood it. This catalyzed a shift to a spiritually focussed rather than materially focussed existence:

> *The most meaningful to me was the information on voluntary simplicity with the connection between reduced materialism and increased spirituality. I can really see this in my own life. I have been so busy focussing on the material side of life that I have ignored the spiritual side. The other thing I really like about the Voluntary Simplicity concept is that it is presented as an individual matter—it is a conscious and voluntary choice and is different for each person rather than a "recipe" of "thou shalts." It also ties the ecological and larger global issues in as being the necessity to push us to simplicity. At the same time the pull of an opportunity of a more spiritual and soulful existence is very appealing. It makes sense for individuals and for the world!*

The shift to a simpler, more connected way of life was a shift that was logical for Kate at both a rational and an emotive level.

Dan did not connect with the "wilderness" experiences as Kate did. Part of this, he suggested, was that he was brought up in an urban environment. When one of the guest presenters led a number of sense-enhancing exercises, Dan had trouble resonating:

> *When [Ian is] in the wilderness, when he's in the thing, it's evident to me that for him it's a very spiritual thing for him, right? Now, I'm not trying to be Ian, but I'm trying to find my own wilderness. His is his wilderness or, I would imagine, the outdoors. So for me, what is it? Because for me it isn't the outdoors, for the most part.*

However, when asked to generate an image of balance, Dan imaged a stream running through a friend's farm, "where there was a bit of low-lying land which he couldn't farm on. Down in a gully with neither wind nor sound invading. It was the most peaceful and balanced places I could imagine." Dan then did not necessarily relate wilderness to balance, but he did connect an external 'land-scape' to an 'inscape.' Indeed, Dan broadened the notion of wilderness to something internal as well as external:

> *A walk in the wilderness does not bring me a peaceful sense, since what I need most is the silence, not the nature. This is also reflected in the fact that I can be recharged while in my house by burning candles, reading, meditating, in silence. Perhaps I am too much a city person. But I don't feel a burning need to be in nature in order to re-charge and re-centre myself. On the subject of things and moments which symbolize balance, the following come to mind: dinner at home with my children, the flickering of a flame, late at night when my children are in bed and the house is still and quiet, sitting on the front porch late at night watching the stars.*

Although his inner wilderness still connected to fire and to stars, it was the silence and peaceful moments that fostered thoughts of the sacred: "Spirituality should come from within; it should be a wellspring from within you. . . . I'm pointed in the right direction; I'm walking there. So how do I get it out? How do I tap into it?" Dan was skeptical of the wilderness walks, visualization, and meditative breathing exercises designed to assist in tapping his inner wellspring. Yet, he slowly began to open himself to these experiences:

> *I think that the more I do theses breathing exercises, the better I get at them and the more beneficial they are to me. I think in the future I will try and do them more often, and try to suspend the cynical side of my nature which wants to dismiss this as a touchy feely exercise. Think for a minute. . . . People have been doing meditation and breathing exercises for thousands of years. [I need to] try to think and experience outside the narrow western civilization box you normally dwell in.*

Brought up in an urban environment without significant wilderness or spiritual experiences, Dan understood that he had been shaped by Western culture, and he wanted to break through those restrictions. He returned to his earliest experiences of quietude, which were not related to an outside wilderness:

> *Maybe because I was raised in the city all my life, I spent very little time in the country, so this is all I've ever known—but I can remember the one, even when I was young, young, like nine, I used to like to go out into [my uncle's] field, and it was so quiet; there was no noise. And I used to like just to wander through the*

> *field and just stand in the quietness. And it came to me the other night that that was something that I really valued. So I think it's the quietness that I value, not the wilderness that I value.[I can create that]where I am. It's portable.*

Given that Dan's earliest solitude experiences were not wilderness experiences, he found solitude in a number of other ways that may incorporate natural elements but are not dependent on them. In solitude and quietness he touched his inner wilderness, which refreshed him.

As he grew through the course, however, Dan experienced the pull of learning from the natural world. He was fascinated by the concept of dynamic balance as a way to pattern his life, one of the three most powerful concepts for him. He said, "My life would be better if I could learn to apply the ebb and flow from natural systems to my personal life." After the retreat he confided:

> *You'll be happy to hear that I've come to the conclusion that this connection is a natural process, and rushing the process will not make it happen any faster. When we had time to ourselves and I went for a walk by myself, I felt a better result."*

Similarly, Dan had difficulty connecting to the notion of abundance and gratitude. Yet, the concept that spoke to his experience was that of fulfillment:

> *On the subject of fulfillment, I find it very easy to recognize and appreciate these moments. It is as if a small bell rings in my head during times when I know that I am doing the things that fulfill me. A good example of this would be last night as my son and I do the supper dishes together. No rush, no hurries, just Calvin and I doing a simple chore together and talking about each other's day. At time like this a sense of peace and tranquillity overtake me, while at the same time I am able to recognize what is happening and lock these memories in my heart. [They] bring a sense of "Yes, this is what's important in my life."*

Like Kate, Dan had moments of deep interconnections. His greatest moments of fulfillment were times of connectedness with his loved ones and when he was mindful enough to "see" the experience and "lock it in my heart." There was a deep resonance in that, like Buddhist bells ring out the mindfulness of flowing with one's purpose:

> *What was it that I wanted to be, when I was young and small? I think that what I most wanted to be was a reflection of my father and his beliefs, characteristics, and traits. I wanted to be loved by many friends, thought of as a good guy, a decent person whose inner compass guided me to do the right things in my life. A person who could, or would be self-sacrificing for the greater good of my family. A person who, while not always being able to vocalize and verbalize his beliefs, was able to know them, and know right from wrong.*

Dan acknowledged that his spiritual task was to return to his inner compass, the ability to determine right from wrong and act on this knowledge. It is an awakening of soulfulness in which the outer culture that shaped one's life is given over to the inner compass that has not always been conscious. Most significant, he was returning to another aspect of his childhood, his sense of wonder and willingness to embrace the unexpected:

> *Slowly, slowly I'm moving there. . . . When you're young, life is a grand adventure, full of mystery, marvels and unexpected turns. I lost that sense of wonder for a long time, but I'm starting to get it back.*

For Dan there was no transformation here, but rather a restoration. He said, "[This] didn't need much clarification; it was my bedrock, my foundation, on which I have based decisions in my life." Now, however, he was much more conscious that this was his bedrock and that which he turned to as a way to guide the rhythm of his life as well as major decisions, a rhythm that welcomed mystery and wonder.

Earlier he talked about suffusing a more organic sense of time into his life in which there were no clocks and no rushing, just relating to his children. Kate echoed this sense of organic time as a way of deeper connectedness. Her image of a good life was now a description of an organic life rhythm:

> *What would be my dream of a "good life"? Having enough time to really nourish relationships and "be there" for people. Not having to live by the clock and be in certain places at certain times for a certain length of time. To decide when to work, when to play, who to love, when to sleep, and when to just sit and think! Not having to worry about the future and just living for today.*

Again, Kate identified that clock nature of time in modern society as the root issue in lacking time to nourish relationships. Similarly, the removal of decision-making power about the rhythm of living has been given over to our workplaces. The rhythm of playing, loving, sleeping, and thinking are now dictated by work time. As time is fragmented to meet the demands of industrial work, so are people's identities. From this fragmentation there develops a sense of playing many roles that are unconnected to an inner identity, an inner compass. These roles are as much the result of clock time and work structure as they are social identity structures. The ability to cultivate "being present in the moment" or living for today, as Kate called it, takes the pressure off always working toward future plans and refocus on enjoying the gifts of the day. This was the primary lesson she had learned from her mother's illness—to be connected to the present moment.

This sense of internal and external connectedness helped to change Dan's understanding of the purpose of work in his life. Dan developed a vision statement that expressed a new goal premised on connectedness that put work in a very different position:

> *To create a community environment in which personal values and relationships are valued over financial issues.*
>
> *Firstly, we as a community and as individuals need to spend more time and effort with our families and on our relationships (social wealth). Secondly, as a society, and to a large degree as individuals, we allow ourselves to be manipulated by money in a thousand different ways (Buy, buy, buy, keeping up with the Joneses, working 2 jobs). The benefits I see are that I will have less possessions which steal my time; therefore I will have more time for those things I deem important to me.*

No longer was work the sole route to an honorable life; nor were material goods the route to fulfillment. The equation of the white picket fence and living honorably had been rent asunder for Dan, and the new signifiers for a life well-lived were living his relational ideals before work, money, and material accumulation:

> *The entire notion of working less hours, which would have been blasphemous to me before the course, now seems like a very good idea. This thought would have never occurred to me before, since in my mind hard work = goodness. I still believe work is good, but I need to concentrate on working on my family and personal relationships.*

This he saw as the route not only to soulful living, but also to a healthy community. Secondarily, he expanded his notion of work to include the need for soulfulness and community contribution.

Paralleling his vision statement was a shift in his understanding of sustainability. Originally, he defined *sustainability* as "the ability to continue things at the status quo for a prolonged period of time; a society which provides for its citizens at a level they have come to expect." In the final interview, he explained the shift in his thinking:

> *Yes, I said that I thought the world takes better care of itself than environmentalists give it credit for. Well, thanks to Myles, I understand that that's not true, that the carrying capacity is X and if you go beyond it, you burn it out. We need smaller cities and to turn the clock back to when bioregionalism was more a fact of life. . . . I don't know how the world does what it does now, never mind in ten years from now. I don't understand how it sustains anything now. . . .*

> *We use a ton of Saran Wrap every day. That's one food services facility; . . . in this city there must be five thousand food services facilities. . . . That's one city. . . . So every time I start to multiply, I don't understand why the world didn't crash [before now]—it's overwhelming.*

From this connectedness framework, Dan had great empathy and respect for the natural world and made the leap from assurance that the Earth can handle the changes to wondering why global natural systems have not collapsed before now. He also now made the connection between the habits of his workplace and how their multiplication has had a deleterious impact on the Earth.

Archetypal Reconnections

Sally also reconnects to organic and spiritual realities, but her connectivity is animated by visions and dreams that have many archetypal symbols in them. The image she sculpted the first night of the class was a plasticine tree with green leaves and a wise woman sitting by it enjoying the sun peeking through the leaves. She explained that the tree symbolized strength, longevity, and new life, and that the leaves are in the form of praise and words of appreciation from colleagues, family, and friends. When asked about the symbolism of the woman, she simply called her Appreciation. Yet, over the duration of the course, she gave more and more meaning to the Woman under the Tree.

The most significant growth for Sally was the growth of her inner strength and vitality. It was this growth that progressively overcame her fear. Her fears began to subside as she shifted to a different regard for her social status, but it was through images and metaphors that beckoned her into a new direction that her fear was overcome:

> *As fearful as I was . . . [my inner self] is growing in strength and it's growing in size; it's growing into the woman maybe that's sitting under the tree—and looking at the lights twinkling through the leaves. [Symbols] help me to understand things and describe things in my world as they happen for me. Who is this wise woman that's sitting here under this tree that you would like to become? I think that would be me, but growing inwardly, that inner growth.*

It was easier for Sally to express her growth and her goals by way of images and metaphors. This was a powerful way for her to learn. By probing her symbols, she began to see that the wise woman was not just the appreciation she desired, but was actually the woman she wanted to become. This woman is a woman of strength—or inner depth—as well as a woman of size—or compassion. She struggled to find the words and used a story to show her maturing connections between the wise woman and growing compassion:

> *I'll give you an example. In one of the classes I work in, there's a little boy who's a very beautiful little boy who is developmentally delayed and lives in a house of horrors. I sense in my mind's eye it's because Mother has probably given him the back of her hand on more than one occasion, or stripped him of any bit of self-esteem that's within him, that he's doing this kind of behavior. He's trying to find the right answer so she's not going to hit him. That's my gut feeling, my mind's eye.[It's both in my forehead and gut]. It's both. They're related; they're attached; they're together. [It's being able to] sense, and to see—[not just through the visual]. It's through that—that spiritual realm. It's like the realm of dreams.*

Her power lay in her ability to see the world through her spirit eye or through what many spiritual traditions have referred to as the "third eye" located in one's forehead. The third eye is traditionally known as the spiritual centre in which the mingling of mind and psyche provides intuitive insight and wisdom. The lessons learned through the third eye usually relate to retrieving one's power from "false truths" and learning to act on an internal direction from a position of strength rather than fear (Myss, 1996: 237). Through the use of metaphors in the class, Sally was more consciously connecting with the power of her spirit eye and was discerning falsehoods that had sapped her power and health. In this way she was tapping her strength rather than her fear.

Further into this conversation she also revealed how her dream life has guided her, and she described one dream in particular in which she linked the desire to be the wise woman with her ill health:

> *There's a realm of dreams that does give me an answer to something. I have no idea how to read it. . . . One afternoon [during my treatment] I fell into a very deep sleep and I had a visitor visit me in that sleep. Yes. I don't know the name to it or whatever, but it told me that it was going to take my good health, and from my nostrils. It pulled it out—I could actually feel it in my dreams—it pulled out my good health with this long string, and the creature took it off out into the heavens, and I woke up. I think I was given that dream years ago, oh, many years ago. Many years ago, but it's a dream I've never forgotten. . . . I was told, but I didn't know what I was being told. And it could be that [I need to learn from my loss of health]. It could be that I have abandoned [my health] searching for all the wrong things, monetary things—just thing things.*

By providing the space for these images, dreams, and archetypes to emerge throughout the learning process, Sally was free to be open to the messages from her unconscious and to make connections between her dreams and her waking life. Her unconscious had been speaking to her for many years—but only now was she able to ascribe meaning to them. For instance, she now linked her loss of health with the dream of many years ago when she ignored the warning and began searching for the wrong things such as material and monetary wealth. Throughout the course she kept emphasizing that she had placed her priority on the wrong things, and now the loss of health was pointing to what priorities should be privileged.

By affirming the importance of these dreams, she could recognize their messages and draw the power and energy she needed for change. In particular, she emphasized that she was moving from the victim place to a gratitude place:

> *My idea of abundance has changed in that I have come to the realization that there are things in life around me that I need to be grateful for—it's very easy to be negative about where I am right now [having to come to the hospital for weekly treatments]. But I can also make myself feel a whole lot better and a whole lot stronger by saying, "Gosh, I'm really grateful that I have a facility to come in to take the treatment; that things are clean; that we have swabs that can be used; that we have different sizes of needles. There's all kinds of things to be grateful for." And I could really let myself cry the blues or pity me, sister. . . . I think I've really been looking very much at myself as a victim, very, very much so.*

Clearly Sally was moving from the victim place toward a sense of abundance and hence, of gratitude for the gifts that had been given to her through her difficulties. No longer did she see her illness and treatments as an inconvenience or source of pity, but as a time for rest and gratitude. She was also shifting from the notion of sacrifice and scarcity to abundance, where she chooses to use her resources for personal growth.

From her experiences she also had a different "seeing"—she could see the inner spirit, and she felt the pulse of woundedness in society. Her restoration was to begin to trust her sight of what was invisible to many others and to act on her heart sight which gave her clarity and compassion. Previously, she hid this clarity and compassion given her social status. Now, however, her social status was becoming irrelevant. This widening sight presented new opportunities for her.

In the last conversation and in the last activity of making a self silhouette, Sally added to her description of the wise woman, the woman she was becoming:

> *[These are] the eyes, the window to the soul, with a wee glint of mischievousness that I see in my mind's eye. I guess for me [your mind's eye] is that inner something that is [beyond] words. . . . [There are] rose petal lips to speak truth, flower petals on the head to represent new ideas and new directions to travel in thought, poppy seeds grown in my flower bed as the natural opium of life within myself that makes me happy with the "who I am," and black pepper for the decay of old thoughts that I am defined by the amount of money I make or the things I have or the credentials I have achieved or the neighbourhood I live in. The flower petal ear is to lend my ear to new thoughts.*

Here the wise woman is a woman of spiritual sight and playfulness, of openness and contentment. This image of the wise woman she titled "The Beauty of Womanhood," and it symbolized a new ontological stance toward life, a stance that Sally understood within herself but found difficult to explain.

In exploring the archetypal symbols of the tree, light, and woman within Jungian literature, the combination of the wise woman and tree is actually the archetype of the Great Mother. In Goddess archetypes, the Great Mother is Demeter (Goddess of grain), who is most fulfilled by providing physical, psychological, or spiritual nourishment to others. According to Bolen (1984), if this need to nurture is rejected or thwarted, she can be predisposed to depression, as illustrated in Demeter's own story and echoed in Sally's "dark moods." Demeter is the most nurturing of the goddesses, with an ability to foster growth. A Demeter woman best expresses this through helping professions such as teaching, nursing, and counseling. Generosity, persistence, grieving the loss of children, loyalty, and strong convictions all characterize Demeter women. The tree, particularly as used at Christmas, was a pagan symbol of everlasting life, with a candle or star at the top to symbolize calling back of the light during the solstice celebration. The tree without leaves can also refer to the cross which Sally used in describing her sense of being crucified by her daily sacrifices. The light coming through the leaves of the trees is usually representative of divine light, which she was now tapping to feed her spirit. All these images that she has used are collectively part of a web of archetypal patterns that are no longer usual objects of conscious reflection in modernity (Jung, 1964: 81), yet were surging up into Sally's conscious life with tremendous power and ancient connectedness.

Marie-Louise Von Franz (1964), a prominent Jungian, explained the meaning of these archetypes as they applied to Sally's life:

> *The Self usually appears in dreams at crucial times in the dreamer's life—turning points when his [her] basic attitudes and whole way of life are changing. The change itself is often symbolized by the action of crossing water. (198)*
>
> *Some profound inner experience of the Self does occur to most people at least once in a lifetime. From the psychological standpoint, a genuinely religious attitude consists of an effort to discover this unique experience, and gradually to keep in tune with it . . . so that the Self becomes an inner partner toward whom one's attention is continually turned. (210)*
>
> *If an individual has wrestled seriously enough and long enough with the anima (or animus) problem so that he, or she, is no longer partially identified with it, the unconscious again changes its dominant character and appears in a new symbolic form, representing the Self, the innermost nucleus of the psyche. In the dreams of a woman this center is usually personified as a superior female figure—a priestess, sorceress, Earth mother, or goddess of nature or love. In the case of a man, it manifests itself as a masculine initiator and guardian (an Indian guru), a wise old man, a spirit of nature and so forth. . . . To women, the Self might appear as a wise and powerful goddess—like the ancient Greek mother goddess Demeter. . . . These paradoxical personifications are attempts to express something that is not entirely contained in time—something simultaneously young and old. . . . Moreover, it appears frequently in a form that hints at a special omnipresence; that is, it manifests itself as a gigantic, symbolic human being who embraces and contains the whole cosmos. When this image turns up in the dreams of an individual, we may hope for a creative solution to his [or her] conflict, because now the vital psychic center is activated (i.e., the whole being is condensed into oneness) in order to overcome the difficulty. . . . [The] symbol [is] the idea of a total oneness of all human existence, beyond all individual units. (196, 197, 200)*

Sally could not express these images or the meanings of her dreams in words because she was in touch with ancient symbols that transcend time and space. She was having a profound inner restoration that was personified in the Goddess Demeter. As she herself expressed, "We are so connected to this planet Earth. The ancient feeling and dreams from long, long ago are still in us."

She had identified her vocation as motherhood, but the image of Demeter encouraged her to expand her mothering compassion to the larger world—to become the wise woman who is at one with the world and holds the world in her compassion. She was being called to her true nature, but as Buddhist teacher Kornfield suggested:

> *We need to examine and untangle the workings of this 'body of fear" in the most personal way. . . . Fear creates a contracted and false sense of self. This false or "small" self grasps our limited body, feelings, and thoughts, and tries to hold and protect them. From this limited sense of self arises deficiency and need, defensive anger, and the barriers we build for protection. We are afraid to open, to change,*

> *to live fully, to feel the whole of life; a contracted identification with this "body of fear' becomes our habit. Out of this fear all of our greed, hatred, and delusion arise.*

Sally's work then needs to provide the space for this whole self to be, to fully embrace this much bigger self beyond her physical boundaries. By reaching underneath this fear that protected her small self, she was discovering her larger self. This was being made possible through a connected consciousness that allowed messages about her inner self to surface. Von Franz (1964) elaborated:

> *In our civilized world, most dreams have to do with the development (by the ego) of the "right" inner attitude toward the Self, for this relationship is far more disturbed in us by modern ways of thinking and behaving than is the case with primitive people. They generally live directly from the inner center, but we, with our uprooted consciousness, are so entangled with external, completely foreign matters that it is very difficult for the messages of the Self to get through to us. (208)*

Vocation in a Buddhist sense is waking up to one's true nature by overcoming the ego-centredness that is expressed by the small self through anger, fear, and limitedness. Sally's experience demonstrates how the concepts of career and vocation have been elided in our society. She was discovering that her vocation was premised on a Self that was much bigger than how she understood her paid work or her biological mothering.

Many other participants also experienced the surfacing of images, particularly through the visualization exercises on the retreat, which spoke powerfully to them. Von Franz (1964) explained that when a profound change is occurring, there may be the symbol of crossing over water or animal figures that illustrate our instinctual natures, our creatureliness, that are fundamentally related to the natural world and the cosmos (207). In a visualization exercise, Gena first met a fox who was her wise one. As she sat in silent communication with Fox, whom she called The Observer, she saw a snow-covered village, much like a cutout. Then she saw an island with water around it and a lone pine tree with small shrubs that reminded her of Spirit Island. She saw a loon on the water. In pondering the meaning, she noted the three nature images that followed the human village, and she asserted that the message was that humans need to learn from nature as opposed to controlling it, and mimic it as a way to determine what the villages needs. Perhaps it is these learnings of biomimicry that will enable the village to move from its one-dimensionality. She said: "It appeals to the thinker in me and my belief in the connectedness of all things, but [I] haven't thought about looking at this on a smaller, perhaps more practical scale through nature—yet it invites me every day!"

She sensed that she was being invited to connectedness and to apply these learnings into her daily life. She wrote that the image gave her a sense of loss—the sad, lonely cry of the loon—the loss of her old world, her old way of seeing. But the image was also one of "peace and internal connection and connection to the past. . . . Guess it gave me a sense of place, . . . time to broaden my scope, . . . to communicate on another level . . . beyond the personal level." This level of communication, grounded in place, is symbolized by the loon's distinctive and evocative wilderness voice. The reconnectedness to the natural world via an archetypal reconnection had broadened Gena's scope of thinking and her ability to glimpse a larger world. She felt enabled to "learn from the greater universe and work with the flow of energy."

According to Henderson (1964), birds, including the loon, can be considered symbols of transcendence in which the union of the conscious mind with the unconscious yields a sense of completeness or wholeness. The loon is the companion as one journeys in the wilderness and undergoes an initiation by taking a decisive step into a new life alone. This initiation was apparent after one of the presentations on dynamic balance at the retreat, as Gena moved dramatically from her wall of resistance to embracing a radically different way of being in the world:

> *[I] just loved [Ian's] presentation, his whole way of tying everything into nature and the greater environment. . . . His way of connecting with place resonated so deeply for me, . . . helped me connect deeply with the idea of sustainability. . . . Well, now that I see I have much to learn from nature, I'm certain to see it very differently. As always with something new, [I] can't learn it quickly enough. . . . Ian just exemplified balance between action and being. [He said] once you take the first step [to] become reconnected, don't stop 'cause it's too enjoyable. . . . I think I tend to turn to nature when I'm ready to "turn off" not "turn on," so what a shift this has created!*

The synergy created between both the loon and water archetypes and a human model of living in balance helped Gena break through her wall of resistance. She moved past a rational belief in connectedness to experiencing a profound connectedness with the natural world at an extrarational level. Through a human mentor and an archetypal reconnection, she was allowing the natural world and her unconscious to guide her. At the end of her journal she wrote:

> *What I found interestingly, is that when I began this course I thought sustainability was way outside what I was looking at. . . . And then . . . I found that it was right under my nose! . . . I'm still able to do the work I've been doing, but in a whole new way. . . . This is so damn exciting! I just can't believe the pace with which things have been happening since the [retreat] weekend. Scary and exciting all at the same time!*

There was a rush of energy for Gena, who was hungry to learn, hungry to act. The interweaving of spiritual, organic, and archetypal reconnections enabled many of the participants to replace the cultural messages with a tangible sense of wholeness and connectedness that could direct their further actions. With a new framework for thinking about their world and nourishment in the form of restored relationships, the last segment of the course concentrated on assisting participants with developing planned actions.

Choosing and Walking a New Road

Energy for Change

As Gena explained, after she had her breakthrough there was a surge of energy and excitement. Nevertheless, when she arrived home after the retreat, she wrote:

> *Am feeling sense of sadness now that I'm home. And I don't think it's the end to the weekend and the connections made. I think it's some of the things I'm letting go of at this time. I'm onto new things. The timing for this course could NOT be better. Letting go of old roles, old beliefs, old ways of doing."*

The surge of energy was accompanied by a grieving and letting go. In her journal, Gena called this period her "post-transformation" and described "transformational learning [as] an experience of balance: letting go, letting in." In one paragraph, Gena clearly showed the juxtaposition of grieving and hoping:

> *I've always had hope for a better world, just wasn't all that sure how that looked. And so now I have sustainability and it's like, YES! this is how it can be—a whole new world ready for exploration! Good lead-in to what's decaying/ breaking down and where there's growth. Biggest change is seen through breakdown of my plasticine house [from the first class]. It fell on the floor one day and now it's all astray. . . . To me the walls and structure (my security) are breaking down around me. Growth is easier to see because it really feels to me like I just burst through the clouds and now there's this whole new world where I am. I see growth in my connection to nature—pine tree, loon, water and my wise one, Fox. Growth in desire to be of service, . . . that's what I wanted to do as a kid, was serve. . . . Growth in feelings of connectedness/community. . . . Growth in global thinking—how pieces connect to whole.*

Even though there was a grieving and letting go, even of security, it was overshadowed by the growth and the view of a new world.

Earlier in the course Gena had determined that her life purpose was to live freedom, by

> *living certain principles, certain qualities, to fulfill a certain mission, dedicate oneself to something noble and worthy . . . [like] contributing to making the larger community/ecosphere a better place.*

Out of an exercise on the retreat, Gena wrote that "identity is not just mind and heart but whole being." After her powerful experiences of connectedness, she strove to capture her full identity within her vision statement, to convey the new wholeness and balance that she sensed. The vision and mission she derived were

> *a Caring, Diverse and Sustainable World. . . . I like it. It's clear, it's big and it just makes a huge difference in giving me a focus. . . . My role (in helping to create this world) is developing effective communication, using learning-based principles, with individuals or groups (who value) committed to sustainability and social wealth.*

From her "big" vision for the global community, she then narrowed it into a mission for how to apply this new identity into her paid work as an educational multimedia developer. As she worked through her action plan, she said "[there were] awfully, awfully exciting ideas [being] presented. Was really fired up when I got home! . . . Am pretty excited about how pieces are fitting together." This energy characterized the remainder of her time in the class, and she radiated this energy that inspired others in determining their vision and action.

After the retreat, Sally too radiated energy and was very animated in the following sessions. She commented:

> *I think maybe some of that energy and vitality is something that I used to have in my youth and just simply got covered up with doing for the family and doing for my husband and sacrificing. . . . I've been able, through that course, to give up those feelings of crucifixion and martyrdom and imprisonment. . . . It took me twenty-some years to get to this point, so to peel away that onion and separate it. . . . I'm looking forward to it. . . . I don't see [anything] as stopping me. . . . [I am going through] probably a time of transformation, and I think all of us go through a transformation in phases. . . . It has helped me to sort through the maze and fog and find my inner self.*

Sally was able to resurface the vitality from her younger days by letting go of the woven fabric of messages—cultural and personal—that were suffocating her. Rather than seeing all the constraints from within a victim position, she moved to a position of empowerment and was not going to be blocked from her goals this time. The new growth was like new sap running through a spring tree bringing new life. She said that had "renewed courage, to continue with my dreams. To stand my ground, reach out and grasp for the things that are important to me."

Ky also had the feeling of being energized after the retreat and in the action planning. This feeling of energy came partly from the rhythm of organic time and solitude, as well as the hope and energy from new plans:

> *The experience of energizing my physical and mental being (through early evenings for sleeping, going for walks, quiet) reminded me of the power that happens as a result of changing one's environment and giving oneself the opportunity to think [and] act freely. . . . I brought home my experiences, . . . a new perspective on where our life may be going/how our life may be unfolding.*

This energy that many of the participants radiated came from taking the risk to dream, to vision, and to craft hope through action possibilities. So what were the action possibilities that some of the participants envisioned and enacted?

Walking the Road

Decluttering

It was unanticipated that the participants would take action early in the course. Yet, as the principles of decluttering and social wealth were introduced, there was a high degree of resonance that addressed some of the participants' entry issues of fragmentation and disillusionment. This compelled the participants to action and provided an immediate satisfaction of acting on their growing understandings.

After the session on voluntary simplicity and social wealth, every participant created a simplicity totem that could be a mindful trigger for decluttering. The word *decluttering* was interpreted in a diversity of ways. Like Anne, many participants began by considering clutter literally and cleaned out their homes of excess material items: "Things, things, things! I am trying to sort through closets and drawers and give away unnecessary clutter. It feels good to let go of some of the 'just in case' stuff!" By simply becoming aware of the movement of "things" through her house, Kate became increasingly frustrated by the need to continuously handle "stuff":

> *The biggest source of clutter in my life is "stuff" that seems to accumulate around the house. I always have little "piles" of things in the kitchen that need to go upstairs or piles of stuff upstairs that need to go down.*

Many participants began to reduce the stuff by boxing it up and sending it for recycling or for resale. Participants also identified mail and media as clutter. Jennifer said, "[I] spend a lot of time dealing with clutter—stuff accumulating: magazines, mail junk. [I] spend time moving it and moving it and finally dealing with it. . . . Sometimes makes me so mad, so much stuff all over, so much time wasted moving it, putting it somewhere." Kate added:

> *Another source of clutter for me is TV. It drives me crazy when my husband turns the news on at supper when the kids are trying to talk to us. I also get upset when TV seems to be more important to someone than what real people have to say.*

For Kate, clutter was also those activities that detracted from the enjoyment of relating that she identified as giving her a sense of balance. Anne expanded her interpretation of clutter on a multiplicity of levels. Anne agreed with the clutter of TV programming and determined to watch TV by consciously choosing programs rather than "sitting in front of the TV mindlessly." Further, she considered TV noise as clutter, and she made an agreement with her husband not to watch the TV news as they went to bed: "The *National Post* has arrived! We have decided to read the news and leave the TV silent as we go to bed."

For Anne, clutter was both physical and psychological. For physical clutter, she wrote that she was thinking "about taking more space on this planet than I need." Although she had been a habitual recycler, she had not thought "much about more detailed work on consuming less. . . . I can see some patterns which I can change. . . . It is important to protect the Earth and ourselves from excesses."

Anne's slow transformation over the course was addressing psychological clutter. In particular, she began to tackle the issue of clutter at work; most significantly, that of cluttered motives:

> *To whom do I report? [To] me and my values? Clients? Staff? Senior management? Yes to all. . . . But what about the times when values conflict? Incredibly fatiguing for me. . . . When surrounding by conflicting messages it is easy to forget who you are and to become reactive. . . . The "de-cluttering" of my life involves coping with the stress of feeling I cannot possibly do what is expected.*

This clutter was at the heart of her entry issue of disillusionment which emerged as a result of conflicting values and priorities. In the last conversation, Anne began to reflect on the change process that she had experienced during the course:

> *I think reframing some of the things has been the first step, . . . going away for three weeks, . . . reconnecting with my family and my extended family. . . . It was a really good reminder of the family values, the life outside of work values. . . . That's sort of the crux of the dilemma: I need to feel that I'm doing something that has a positive impact and everything I do I want to do well. . . . [I was] expressing great impatience with the leaders [of the health system] who are looking at the political agenda. And maybe I need to say, "Look at the small steps instead of being totally discouraged by the big picture."*

The course assisted Anne by affirming the importance of her family life outside of work and accompanying her while she determined what changes she could undertake for a positive impact and to "do a good job" in a politicized health system.

> *I think it was strengthening in the sense that you weren't ever told [in the course], "This is where you should be." If you're seeking balance or you're seeking a transformation, you need to find your own meaning of that and what your own transformation will be. For some it'll be huge[ly] dramatic; for others it'll be small steps. I felt [the course] was [a] container, very supportive of whatever it was you were doing, you could do it. . . . It was helpful because I took it and thought "I'm not alone in this journey of trying to work with a big system that's frustrating. . . . I've made some small steps, and I would like to learn more."*

In the short term, the changes that she made were not dramatic but were indeed the small steps of clarifying her principles and naming the conflicting principles operational in her workplace. This process enabled her to reframe her workplace clutter and determine the small spaces where she could make more of a difference. What she learned from this course on transformational learning was the patience needed for a process of "small steps," the change model emulated in the course. She did not feel pressured to make radical change or to make change in a certain direction. Rather, she felt supported in her frustration and in her difficult process of determining what would be effective. In the end the most important sustenance was the assurance that there were many other people of good heart who were all journeying and learning on this same new road together. She was not alone.

In the one-and-one-half years since the end of the course, Anne has continued to learn more by leading sessions for her previous classmates on "decluttering and health" and on the social wealth model that guided the design of a new extended care facility under her purview. Most recently, the educational aspect of her job, from which she derived the most satisfaction, was created into a new position. Having come to terms with the limitations of her existing position, she applied and was hired for this position. Although the scope of responsibilities was still very broad, she was very excited and reenergized as she looked forward to ameliorating the tremendous fragmentation that she was experiencing. She said that this was "her dream job" as she now could overtly mentor her staff from this educational position. She was no longer divided between her management responsibilities and her educational responsibilities and could challenge the disillusioning values in the health system by creating a social force for competing values that places clients, not politics, first. This was Anne's contribution to a sustainable society.

Social Wealth

Kate linked decluttering and social wealth by understanding the reduced emphasis on material things as the flip side of the increased emphasis on people:

> *I chose to put the words "material adequacy" and "social wealth" on my totem to remind me of what is really important in life. By keeping this in mind I am becoming more conscious of how I compromise relationships or put them second to my work. I feel as though I have a "rebuilding" process to initiate in order to gain a better "balance" between the material and social aspects of my life.*

Kate now has redefined balance as the balance between materiality and sociality not between working and living. Once she privileged social wealth, the importance of her job waned, as did the need for material things to "fill" various needs. Her primary "reframing" was toward a mindfulness that cherished people but was also conscious of relational habits that did not issue from an inner centredness:

> *What helps me with this "decluttering" is to stop and think about things rather than just automatically doing them. It also helps me if I can connect with people and focus on them instead of thinking about myself. The other thing that could help me is if I can think for myself more than just automatically doing what I think others want me to do. I need to think for myself whether or not activities are consistent with my vision. I think that's part of the whole becoming conscious of what's really going on. I think about it more; it's more of a conscious thing as opposed to just to feel better. If you really think about it, do we really need this? or Why am I buying this? That kind of the question. What's it replacing?*

Kate was conscious now of the habits and actions that created illusory or authentic happiness. All of her actions—from expenditures of time, money or focus—

revolved around the vision of social wealth. This granted her a sense of power by not being buffeted by all the swirling expectations around her:

> *This week my approach was more on only spending money if it contributed to my vision of social wealth. I have needed to involve my family and to a lesser degree other people such as moms from the school, my friends, and relatives. I feel more powerful and "in control" as I take action to really focus on people and relationships. . . . Decluttering to me is a broader task to eliminate activities that don't contribute to social wealth in my life and to be conscious of whether or not activities do contribute.*

Kate's first significant action around this vision of social wealth was to decide to accompany her husband to the funeral of an uncle:

> *It means taking another day of work in a four-day week in which I am already only planning to work two days. I asked myself, though, What is more important, a day at a job or supporting the man I love and his family during a difficult time? Based on my totem of material adequacy and social wealth, the decision was obvious.*

This shift was evident also in her parenting as she shared her social analysis and shifting priorities with her son:

> *The final event that really opened my eyes was when my eight-year-old son was looking at my totem from class. When I explained that our society was based on "things" and getting lots of "things" he agreed and said that's what he wanted because he felt something was "missing." . . . This made me wonder if what was "missing" for him is some relationships and social contact. Because I am a working mom, we don't spend a lot of time with his friends outside of school or in organized activities. I explained to him that if something is "missing" he should be looking to people and relationships to "fill the gap" instead of things. Powerful stuff when I see information from class lived in the lives of my children.*

From making new decisions around social wealth at home, Kate turned her attention to her disillusioning and fragmenting job. Slowly her readings, reflections, and connectedness experiences began to merge toward a decision. The merger began at the retreat, and the following excerpts from the next month illustrate the shift in action:

> *Something really "happened" for me out there. I have always known my "connection" with nature and how I enjoy it but somehow I feel that connection has matured. My vision is to create a world where family and personal relationships are central instead of finances and economics, . . . ensuring that my life choices are not detrimental to my community or the ecosphere. . . . My big dilemma in life is that I want to quit my job but I am finding it very hard to do. I am wondering if my "struggle" around this is that I am addicted to my work and the money it provides. If this is the case, I guess it makes sense that I can't just quit "cold turkey" and need to give myself time to "heal" from my addictive*

> *habits. A lot has happened in the past day. I have been physically transformed from one place to another. . . . It feels to me like all of this material is starting to merge together into some meaningful messages for me. . . . I feel like I am getting 'close" to some answers/truths but can't quite grasp them. . . . Another "moving" moment for me was when I walked into the coffee room in the morning and saw about eight people just sitting there staring ahead and drinking coffee. There was no talking, no laughing, no interaction; they were like corpses. . . . after 12 years—not much of a "community." . . . So now I just have to consider how to quit.*

The connectedness to the natural world and in all her human relationships began to carry Kate in a new direction that she had been seeking from the beginning of the course. The one aspect of her life that was glaringly incongruent with this new road she was walking was her job. She realized that she would need to take a sequenced approach to leaving so that she could progressively heal from her addiction to her job and its monetary rewards. She realized that there was no monetary reason to stay at her job, and she began intense conversations with her husband around the possibility of leaving her job. She facilitated these discussions by asking her husband to read some of the materials from the class and discussing them together. Each day as she entered work she reexamined the experience from her new framework and found it wanting. From her reading and thinking about job possibilities that incorporated sustainability, she decided that she would really like to move into an educational position in which she could assist others in basic home and financial skills that would take them toward financial independence and sustainable lifestyles. Six months later, Kate did take a leave of absence from her job just "to see." When her six-month leave elapsed, her workplace asked her to make a decision about coming back. She decided to take the leap of faith and sent in her resignation letter. With great relief, she wrote:

> *As a result of a lower income in our family I am much more conscious of my spending and consumption. I have learned not to equate my self-worth with how much money I make and instead have been receiving fulfillment from being a parent, spouse, daughter, friend and neighbour. I no longer spend an hour a day in a vehicle commuting downtown. . . . I make it a challenge to plan everything I need the car for on one day to avoid unnecessary trips. We make an effort to purchase what we need in our local community and walk for errands whenever possible. . . . Often times I find that I can find something I already have to meet the need with a bit of fixing or adjustment.*
>
> *[In my previous job] we were always telling people to use less energy to protect the environment and we always found no one really cared very much. . . . I*

> *want to be able to work with individuals and groups to help them learn to live a happy and fulfilling life without destroying our planet. I [am working] on a course outline to help people look at their finances and spending and make more conscious spending decisions. I hope that we will be able to offer this course and other courses. . . . The motivation to change is no longer because the government or big business or "big brother" tells us we should but because it is the best thing for us as individuals to live our lives to the fullest potential. I can't think of any better motivation than that!*

Once Kate had made the agonizing decision to leave her job, she had a powerful clarity of the new direction she would like to travel. During the course, Kate made a progression from decluttering to social wealth to walking the road as an educator helping to create a sustainable society. She and one other class participant who is a financial planner just received grant funding to develop their course in association with the Transforming Working and Living course. They are offering this course in the fall of 2001.

Journeying to Voluntary Simplicity With Companions and Skeptics

Dan's transformation was also the movement toward material simplification and social wealth. He recognized two aspects of his transformation that were critical—that he could not do it alone and that this would be a slow metamorphosis:

> *I find the act of decluttering hard to do in some ways. Firstly, I live in a society which promotes spend and buy. So doing this is sort of going against the flow. Secondly, I feel to a great degree, alone in this endeavour. I am not going to quit, because simplifying my life is very important to me right now. The fact remains however, that there are forces working against me. Perhaps what is important to remember is that it does not have to be a sudden quick change, but rather a slower metamorphosis . . . to adequate!!! The biggest thing that would help me is if my family [and friends] understand . . . my greater need to work on me, and understand that I am not snubbing them when I choose to stay at home and work on me and [be with] my children before I spend time with them.*

Dan laid out his priorities as decluttering the material items in his household and consuming less. However, he realized that his mother and sisters as well as his children needed to be involved in this decluttering program. He set about trying to explain to them what his decluttering goals were. While he was inviting his family members to journey with him, he felt the resistance. This is best reflected through a conversation with his girlfriend. Ironically, although Dan enhanced his connectedness on some levels, the changes in him led to a disconnection with dominant culture and its myriad of interlocking messages:

> *Yes, [this is a transformation]. Subtle, profound. . . . For instance, I'm watching this commercial the other night, and they've got these new Glad containers, . . . so they have this commercial where they show the advantages: microwaveable and [then] they say "Reheatable" is one advantage. And then the second advantage is the price. [Then] it says "Tossable" as an advantage. . . . I'm sitting on the couch with [my girlfriend], and I go, "Oh, yes, that's an advantage. Yes, let's fill up the landfill some more." And she just looked at me like I was nuts, eh? And she goes, "Do you see what I mean?" I said, "What?" She goes, "Right there," she said. "You wouldn't have said that six months ago," she said. "But now, the thought of tossable being the thing offends you." So it's changed, but it's deeper inside.*
>
> *Somebody had said—it was Heather—how her husband's friends were worried about her because she was getting too radical, and she hadn't done anything. [They thought] she'd gone off the deep end. So I'm thinking, "Here's someone I care about and who cares about me, and she thinks I was flaky for a while, and I didn't even do anything! She thinks I'm flaky because I have these new views on things. God forbid if I should ever make a [real] change.*

The transformation for Dan was the journey to voluntary simplicity. Although he needed companions on this journey to support the difficult decision to flow against the cultural consumer tide, he felt surrounded by skeptics. The depth to which the consumer ideology has penetrated in society is evident by the high degree of threat that his family and friends felt as Dan opted for voluntary simplicity:

> *If I decide to step out of or to step back from Western society, then I'm all of a sudden a rebel. . . . She's exactly what I'm going to face on a daily basis. . . . I think the hardest part is all the crap you would have to put up with and to find some people who had made the same changes as you to have as a support network would be the most important thing, because you've made these changes.*

The words *radical*, *flaky*, and *rebel* were used to indicate that Dan was being disobedient by opposing the cultural authority of what is "normal" practice. He said that he needed both an intestinal fortitude to withstand the skepticism and a support network. He went on to liken this to conflicting religious systems:

> *Here's the deal: You won't find me picketing with the environmentalists any time soon, but things like Special Spaces 2000 and that, I do more reading on that. . . . In a lot of ways this is like religion, because people think, 'Okay, work is honorable.' They have the same theories or value systems that I have and had. So anybody that questions those value systems, it's like somebody questioning their religion, so that is scary to them, so they marginalize us by calling us flaky.*

Dan now equated the interlocking cultural messages as a religion that most people espouse without really being aware of the religion itself. He clearly identified the feeling of being marginalized when he questioned the cultural dogma, even in the seemingly most trivial way. Yet, his new capacity for a spiritual connectedness, empathetic connectedness to the Earth, and desire for relational connectedness were powerful nourishment that guided him through the skepticism that surrounded him. The shared experiences among the class participants formed an important womb for working out ideas and for establishing companions for the inner journey, but as Dan said, he also required support in his daily world.

Most of the participants had similar responses from family and friends. When Hope began the course, she was puzzled by the responses from her immediate family. The question she faced after the first session was, "Does this mean that by the end of this course, you're going to become a vegetarian and burn incense throughout the house?" She reflected:

> *I was furious, amazed, and embarrassed all at the same time! Why is it that just because some people don't lead the same lifestyles, that we are quick to label them and call them unusual?! I wondered if it was because they feared this type of lifestyle choice, that maybe it threatened their materialistic views? It's sad because I came home so energized, and by the end of the conversation I was deflated and tired from trying to defend a lifestyle choice which I saw as being very honorable.*

Hope continued to face these comments, but given her health issues and the health issues of her parents, she was determined to persist in her voluntary simplicity agenda.

Throughout the course, she and Dan were considering the same change, that of shifting to working part-time hours. By the end of the course, Hope did get approval for part-time work. She was worried, though, about her husband being able to give up the material extras. One year after the course, her workload increased, and she began to work more hours again. Her husband, having witnessed the improvement in her health and outlook when she worked part-time, chided her for straying from her original goals and asked her to consider part-time work again. She was amazed at the change in her husband, who eventually moved from skeptic to passive supporter.

Many participants reported similar responses from their family and friends, and they yearned for an ongoing support network that Dan desired. All of the participants from the class agreed that they wanted to continue to gather regularly, but with the leadership coming from within the group rather than from the formal instructors. The group continued to meet monthly to discuss various topics from the course, to deepen their knowledge through additional speakers, and to support one another in the difficult process of changing against the cultural tide.

Dan was still struggling with the option of part-time work. As a single parent, he felt that he did not have the financial freedom to consider less income at the moment. Rather, he called this a "staging" time in his life:

> *Would I like to make change? I think it is much easier to make these changes when you are 20, and the only person it's going to affect is yourself. For the rest of us, it's like trying to step out of a tornado that we are caught in. . . . We have been conditioned to think that if we stop working at that treadmill, disaster will soon follow. I'm sort of in the staging area right now in my life. It's like, get things ready, and then when the opportunity presents itself, I can pursue what I want. . . . Which is very irritating, because I have this fear that what I learned and what I felt and what changes I went through will dissipate over time, [and] the real world says, "Whoa. This is not possible."*

Dan did step out of the tornado to reflect on the treadmill, and disaster did not follow. He was now conscious about where he could make change and where he needed to maintain security during the transition. In a public-speaking opportunity, Dan articulated well the "profound and long-lasting changes" in his life since he was in the course, particularly in respecting the carrying capacity of the Earth and thereby adjusting his consumption according to this principle and the principle of bioregionalism. He was much more cognizant of learning "to apply the ebb and flow from natural systems to my personal life" and striving for social wealth and material adequacy. Even though he was frustrated with regard to adjusting his work hours, as his children grow, so will his capacity to make further radical changes. He now volunteers for the Sierra Club doing school presentations on urban sprawl.

Voluntary Simplicity and Home-Based Work

Ky and Garth did not realize that they were on the path toward voluntary simplicity. During their summer reevaluation of their living and working, they knew they had to make substantial lifestyle changes, for with Garth unemployed and Ky working contract work, they no longer felt the financial stability of the past:

> *Yes [this is a time of transformation]. This is the first time that we've ever not had everything really secure. We radically adjusted our lifestyle and we had a good time, but we were very conscious of the fact that we didn't have a lot of money coming in at that point. . . . The kids were aware of it too, and [so] we spent a lot of time just doing stuff together.*

The summer of reevaluation was a formative time for their family. Garth recalled:

> *It was almost like a spiritual thing. . . . We always enjoyed each other, so we had a lot of time together, we'd putt around the acreage or we'd go for walks, or one habit that I have now . . . is in the morning . . . [outside by the flower bed] sit out there and watch the sun and look around. And it dawned on me, you know, when you work you miss all this stuff. Like I missed in the morning when the kids were going to school, being up and talking to them in the morning and when they come home. . . . The more I thought about it, I thought, It's stupid. Why, why run all the time?*

His decision out of this summer experience was to look for a job and make as much money as possible for early retirement. They were still dependent on the notion that one of them needed to have a "job." During the fall, Garth kept applying and taking interviews while Ky was involved in the course:

> *He would go into an interview, he'd come out and I can see his [face]. I said "You don't want this, do you?" "No, I don't want this." During that whole time he was looking for maybe just doing some private contracts. . . . We were looking at, "Can we live without these benefits?"*

Job dependency has a powerful pull through the regular monthly paycheque and range of medical and dental benefits as well as pension funds. Yet, the sense of burnout and the disillusionment of constant ethical compromise within the system world were growing more powerful for Ky and Garth, to the point where they were beginning to let go of the notion of a "job." Garth began to like being at home, being rested, and seeing his teenagers more:

> *I remember thinking about, why am I here? What is the value of my life? What can I do? . . . Slow down! Let's smell the roses, you know. . . . Interesting thing that happened, when I told the kids that I was going to start looking for a job, [they] all reacted "No! Who's going to make my porridge in the morning? Who's*

> *going to be here to talk to us in the morning and sit with us? Are you going to have time to do stuff with [us]?" So I thought, Hey, wait a minute now, there's something to this, you know. And I thought about a home-based business.*

Ky echoed Garth, indicating that the readings and other course material were important in several ways. First, they provided names for the changes that they were making, as well as a new framework through which to view these changes; and second, they were affirmed through the knowledge that they were part of a growing movement for simple living. This redoubled their commitment to making consumption changes:

> *Our lives are changing, the readings are tremendously affirming for our lives, it is incredible. . . . The simplifying works so well. . . We feel part of a movement. . . . It brings in the whole spirituality of "God has plans." . . . Before we thought we were simplifying in isolation and we would think "Is there something wrong with us?" . . . It has been a tremendous life journey of discovery. Wow, we could live on my small, part-time income! I think we went the other way [moving away from security and our comfort zone].*

Ky understood that the "synchronicity" of the timing of the course, the changes they were needing to make materially, and their job decisions all seemed to be part of a bigger plan. This sense of flowing with the opportunities and being part of a bigger movement ameliorated the anxiety and striving for security. Garth explored the details of running a home-based business. They eventually organized such a business, and Garth teased that he now worked for Ky. There was a great deal of anxiety during these months, but Ky explained that it was not fear. There was more fear from staying in the old patterns. In the process, Ky and Garth began to shed many of their old notions about working. Ky explained:

> *[I took the course because] that was just a job shift. [We needed] a total shift. I think I had just sort of started this mind-shift thing . . . I probably never really realized when people talk about contracting out, I didn't really know what it was about. I remember going into my interview and saying, "Will you tell me how many hours a week I'll work?" "No, no, no, that's up to you.". . . And I was, Wow! [It] was completely foreign to [me] because [I] had been in a nine-to-five so-called salaried position. . . . I don't think I'd ever seen myself in that kind of position of being able to have that much choice. . . . So that was a big learning experience.*

Ky drew the distinction between making a move into contract work and the "mind-shift" that was required to look at work in an entirely new way. She now had complete freedom to define her own work, set her own hours and days, and fulfill her duties without supervision. The parameters were her own to dictate, and this gave her an uneasy feeling at first. The Industrial Revolution notion of work as a 40-hour work week and as a wage was fading for Ky and Garth. They needed to make the shift to seeing their work differently: "It's a different new picture where I can see things in a different light."

Now, for Ky and Garth, their living and working were no longer opposed but were fundamentally intertwined as the warp and woof on a loom. Their rhythm of time, space, body, and relations have been transformed, and they set their own parameters and dictate their own space so that they can "enjoy life more and not be so driven." If they wanted to accompany their teenagers during the day, then they worked in the evening, so that their work flowed around their family responsibilities. Ky was able to integrate her working, living, and spirituality by having a slower pace most of the time and therefore was able to be mindful. They worried now that something might happen to change this high quality of living:

> *I think that's what we're trying to do now, is "Can we keep this going and enjoy it? Can we keep this style going without having to buy into the big organizations again who own your soul?" I think that course really helped in [seeing a role in creating a sustainable society]. And I think that's something that as a parent I really want to stress to our kids, is use things; don't use people, so it was just the right course at the right time.*

They concluded that it was easier to take the risk to make these large changes as a couple, sharing the ideas and anxieties along the way. They have developed new friendships "with people that see things your way." They both said that they are free and will never go back to "belonging to an organization": "We feel that we have accomplished and are in the process of attaining many goals related to personal and job satisfaction, family dynamics, and environmental impact issues. The course content, participants, and instructors . . . definitely served as a catalyst and affirmation of our process—that lifestyle choices can be achieved and controlled by individuals who are willing to pursue these changes."

Environmentally Conscious Living

In Jennifer's presentation of her action plan on the last day of class, she summarized the impact of the course and her desire to also move toward environmentally conscious living:

> *I have been able to understand that this job does not provide me with the income I thought it did, [and] it no longer fulfills me and jibes with my life purpose. The*

> *class has reminded me of the problems humans are creating by the way we live in the world, that we cannot continue to live this way. Evaluating our current economy/living of consume/throw away and how this impacts the world and ecosystems is important in shaping my vision.*

The vision that Jennifer crafted for herself was to live in "a world where people are more aware of their environmental impact on the world, minimizing their impact and restoring it for all life." She resolved to research and implement the various environmental principles and practices in her home and work to reduce her impact.

She found this vision to be difficult to implement given some of the conflicts between environmental practice and public health. For instance, in reusing lumber from kitchen cabinets for a composter, they discovered that it had lead paint on it. Despite these frustrations though, they continued to compost and recycle vigorously and planned to purchase a lower emission vehicle. However, Jennifer realized that until she changed her job, she would not be able to drive less, make fewer purchases related to work, improve her health, or have more time to be involved in community activities that might utilize her professional expertise and lead her to another opportunity. However, she was not short on options to consider as she waited for her husband to be in a more stable financial situation:

> *The course also got me considering other ideas for changing my work. . . . I was toying with just getting out . . . and onto another [similar line of work]. I've rethought that and maybe that's not the answer. . . . At this time, I perceive my job as a way of enabling me to earn money to be able to live, and my [environmental] action is my true work.*

Overall, she knew the change she needed to make, but she was also in a transition or staging time, as was Dan. Nevertheless, she said:

> *I look at things a little bit differently than I did. . . . I'm a little bit more cognizant of "Stop it. You're not at work. You can't do anything about it anyway, and you're not going to let it interfere with this part of your life." . . . It's still change for me, but I think I'm further along that path than I was. And I've had people close to me say that "You seem to be in a better space about work." . . .Now I am sure I do not want to be sixty-five and retiring from this! So be aware that this is a phase or whatever; this is temporary; it sort of got me on a journey; . . . it started to make me think about . . . those "Why am I here? What is my purpose?" kind of questions.*

The process was a process of questions that eventually began to clarify which roads she did not want to travel down and revealed new roads previously unconsidered. She said that this added up to

> *pretty big; life-impacting changes. . . . I don't know how to explain that. . . . I keep saying "spirituality," . . . just being sort of more grounded and aware of who we are and where we are in this environment. . . . It's opened even my perspective, so I'm open to differences and other possibilities.*

Simply considering these life purpose questions enabled Jennifer to be more "grounded" in her own positionality both in the human and natural worlds. This continued to guide her on her journey of discovery.

Environmentally Responsible Technology

As with Ky and Garth, Gena's partner made it possible for her to make the work transition she had been wanting to make as a move toward sustainable living. Early in the course, Gena quit her job of eight years and registered in the new certificate program in multimedia technology offered at the local technology institute. She wrestled with the question of how computer technology could be used in an environmentally responsible manner.

After her wall of resistance came down during the retreat, and with her ensuing hunger to learn, Gena used the action-planning sessions to devise how to use her new training. She found "rich meaning in sustainability—it makes sense! A vision of how the world can be, what caring and diversity can create!" From this immense energy and new meaning, she began to define her mission: "My role in helping to create this world is developing effective communication, using learning-based principles, with individuals or groups who value [and are] committed to sustainability and social wealth." Slowly she started seeing the connections between her certificate program, the sustainability course, and her previous work. She identified her strength as "taking technical/scientific information and making it understandable to the layperson."

She decided to dedicate her skills and talents to the environmental community and was actively seeking work within this community. She wrote, "I'm interested in dedicating my skills to promoting sustainability." She was currently helping to shape several projects blending transformational learning into multimedia educational processes. She also was one of the key leaders in the monthly gatherings of the

Sustainers. She and her partner have also made substantial changes in living habits as well. Organic foods now comprise up to 35% of their groceries, they support local producers as much as possible, and they check origins of foods. They have eliminated toxic chemicals from their home, use cloth bags for shopping, and have reduced gift giving in favour of donations. Gena now walked to work rather than driving, and they cut their car trips by using a biweekly schedule. To foster their ongoing learning, they attended various forums and conferences on related topics and subscribed to alternative media sources as their primary source of information. "In summary, the outcome of my experience is less waste through material consumption, less consumption of resources, promotion of sustainable practices, and greater consideration of the environment in all my decision-making." She ended her journal with the following quotation:

> *It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare,*
> *It is because we do not dare, that they are difficult.*

Building Sustainable Communities

Sally also dared, as did Gena. She took a two-pronged approach to her action planning. After the visit to the farm using sustainable agriculture, Sally was determined to start a farmers' market for the north side, which she defined as a "depressed area." "So, I'm thinking, why could that not be my vocation? Why could that not be my contribution towards the community? Would it work? Would it not?" She began some investigations of a site she wanted to rent, and she gathered background information on the other farmers' markets in town and market gardeners:

> *This has been great for me, . . . looking at the neighbourhood and thinking, 'What could we do here to improve this neighbourhood? What could be done to give back to the community?' . . . This thing [idea] seems to be pointing to me, it seems to keep nudging me forward.*

Her mission statement was to bring rural and urban communities together to renew and transform the community and create sustainability through agrarian values and artistic creativity. Sally wove together bioregionalism, social justice, transformation, and sustainable communities around the provision of organic foodstuffs for low-income people. It was also another expression of her "Great Mother" vocation of nurturing and nourishing.

Sadly, Sally ran into a roadblock. The rent on the preferred site was enormous, and with few funding options and little time, Sally had to set the idea aside for now. She returned to her dream of obtaining a certificate and was currently working diligently on her adult education certificate. The most lasting changes for Sally have been identifying a sense of vocation and her principles as a hinge upon which all her future activities would revolve:

> *I can [work at my job with a different attitude] while I pursue my studies. I have to pursue something that I feel is of value for me that's going to add to me. . . . It's [a transition time], but at least I'm happier with it, with my situation, and that's an attitude shift. It helps me to cope. I have knowledge that I can draw from and replenish my spirit.*

Sally now had the resources she required to nurture and nourish herself. As she continued her studies, there were shifts in the household work as well:

> *The inner is becoming stronger. I've even had occasion, more than once even, to stand up to my husband and say, "No, that's not what I want to do" or "I don't think you should do it this way or that way. I think it should be done this other way." . . . Now I can use a definitive voice that is firm. . . . My inner self now allows me to be take charge of my own destiny. . . . [Now] when I find myself snowballing into a trap of anxiety with thoughts of "Gosh, I should be doing this," or "My God, my husband had to pick up the broom and sweep the kitchen floor. Terrible me!" I'm able to now step back from that and say, "Oh, he's helping. Isn't that nice? That is a switch, . . . [separating] myself from quite a few different things.*

Her growing self-esteem and courage provided the energy required for change as she slowly explored a number of new possibilities and practiced her new way of thinking:

> *I need to work on practic[ing] those ways of thinking. . . . [As I think about the two ways to go], I still have lots to learn. I have more courage now to explore more, to face the fear and do it anyway.*

As Sally explained, the process was never-ending, and action constantly requires investigation and exploration. She was open to the process now, able to embrace fear and able to forge down a new road step by step.

As these individuals engaged with the course, they considered themselves to be at a crossroad at which the purpose and path questions were surfacing. For some participants, a chaotic rupture demanded quick decisions and actions as their old horizon of meaning faded and they increasing understood that their habitual life patterns were ineffective. For others, there was an accumulation of issues that increased their level of anxiety and desire for change. Whether they reached the crossroad through a rupture experience or accretion of issues, the desire for change was often related to the possibility of death—either physical or an identity death of some form. This comprised a transformative opportunity in which these participants searched for new meanings, enhanced consciousness, and life-giving changes in their daily living.

These transformative opportunities were mediated by the course pedagogy, which provided a structure for asking questions and seeking new directions. However, the transformative process of the participants also mediated the unfolding of the pedagogy. Although the pedagogy was structured to interweave action research and transformative learning processes, it remained open and fluid according to how the participants responded. The next chapter, then, shall examine the interweaving between questions and structure, between separating and reconnecting, between affirmation and heightened crisis.

CHAPTER NINE:

BEYOND MIDLIFE CRISIS THEORY

> *A human being is part of the whole called by us the universe, a part limited in time and space. He can experience himself, and his personal feelings, as something separate from the rest, a kind of separation—delusion of his consciousness. This delusion can be a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in all its beauty. (Albert Einstein)*
>
> *Spiritual practice is revolutionary. It allows us to step outside our personal identity, culture and religion to experience more directly the great mystery, the great music of life. (Kornfield, 1993: 322)*

RETURNING TO THE QUESTION

So what is the big deal with transformation anyway? As portrayed in the first two chapters, the persistent calls for transformation are solidly rooted in the Enlightenment assumptions and desires of the Modern Age. The notion of change has been central to modern thinking—the nonacceptance of what has gone before and the unfettered faith in change as betterment. Transformative change, in particular, has been considered the most profound form of change toward an ideal state. It has been used to mean psychological change toward authenticity, economic change toward material well-being, organizational change for enhanced profitability and effectiveness, intellectual change toward freedom, and social transformation toward new dynamics of power. How, then, is this study positioned within these calls for transformative change?

One task of this research was to question the notion of transformation itself—the assumption of the reconstructibility of society and individuals. The second was to question the process of transformative learning, particularly toward being an autonomous individual and transformation as a cognitive and analytical process. The third task was to determine whether the reconceptions of transformative learning would be effective for finding educational entry points for rethinking work and living. The intent was to move beyond prescriptive utopian projects using instrumental forms of transformative learning toward identifying the underpinnings of an ethically committed pedagogy of engagement.

The process of action research was utilized to allow study of how understanding develops in the midst of change. Action research was considered an ethical activity which is a living practice of wholeness. In this way, the investigation attends to ontological components of being as well as the epistemological components of knowing. To do this, the paradox of seeing whole and seeing partial was embraced.

SHIFTING METAPHORS: FROM LABYRINTH TO WEB TO DANCE

I began this study using the metaphor of a labyrinth—the great womb through which humans thread their journey of life, death, and rebirth. This metaphor of a sacred guide assisting this journey through the labyrinth is an ancient feminine archetype for the journey of transformation. As Jung taught, archetypes are primordial images of utmost importance as they can determine the course of history. Is the labyrinth a satisfying archetype for this study? Does this archetype enable me to "see whole"?

The most troubling aspect of this metaphor is that it provides an image of unidirectional, underground, and impermeable passages. When laid beside the findings of New Science and many ancient wisdom traditions—that reality is undivided, unbroken, and without borders—this metaphor does not quite capture "seeing whole." How can we understand the findings in a way that respect the nonlinearity, interrelatedness, and multidimensionality of life—the dynamic unfolding nature of reality that can never be fully captured in any theory? How can this seeing whole guide the next levels of analysis to some final conclusions? How can we see whole without lapsing into grand narratives?

From his explorations into the New Science, educator David Selby (2000) suggested that we need to shift metaphors from a web metaphor of reality to a dance metaphor of reality. For Selby, the web or "systems" way of seeing reality still falls within a view of reality founded on separation and fragmentation:

> *My question is: have we gone far enough in our response to mechanism and reductionism? Metaphors tell their tale. The metaphor of the web is instructive. It can signify frailty—think of the delicate filaments of a spider's web caught in the dew of the early fall. As such the web suggests the delicacy of the strands of any ecosystem—so easily disrupted by human interference. It can signify strength and security—think of the strength and resilience of ecosystems through the ages—think of the net that holds the falling acrobat. It can also signify entrapment—think of the spider's web from the perspective of the fly. Think of the marginalized caught in the web of economic globalization. So, we need to be clear what our web metaphor is suggesting. Webs can be liberating; they can also be constrictive. . . . We still see the entities [of the web] as primary, solid, and separate. . . . There are positive and shadow sides to any metaphor. (2-3)*

Similarly, the labyrinth has its positive and shadow sides. I originally chose it because it evoked the Feminine Principle in which a sacred guide (Wise Woman) helps us through the times when our way is obscured and the passages in life are difficult. I also used it to unite reason with imagery to signify a more holistic understanding of the transformative process through life, death, and rebirth. As the participants described, they were groping for a guide and for companions to help them find their way as they faced life and death issues. This course held promise for them—a thread they could follow—to make some new choices at the crossroads. They needed to retell the story of the past journey by using a new interpretive framework that reframed cultural messages. Standing together at the crossroad and seeing hopeful models, the activities of the course heightened the sense of crisis, and they felt pressure to move ahead, to face their fears. They intuited that rebirth was possible, that wholeness was possible. Through various means they entered the center of the labyrinth—the sacred space—which they accessed through archetypal images and through organic and spiritual reconnections. From these experiences they could clarify their life purpose and find the energy needed to choose and start walking down a new passage.

Yet, the metaphor of the labyrinth has a shadow side. It connotes a unidirectional motion with impermeable passages that implies that a "wrong" choice can be made. As a participant in a subsequent course expressed, he was grieving over the "wrong" roads taken in his life and his sense of having "wasted time" for many years. The passageways, then, can also be seen as solid and separate entities that restrict movement, accentuate "wrongness," and feed the modern desire to "work hard" and "reach" (through mastery) the "preferred state" which lies at the end of the passage. It provides a sense of striving to reach the greater whole at the center rather than understanding that the whole is pervasive. To shift the metaphor, we need to shift the question from "Are we constantly moving toward the sacred center?" to "Are we in the sacred center but not aware of it?"

Krishnamurti (1982) contended that if we are "working" to transform our lives, if we are trying to "solve" the problem we currently face, then we continue the fragmented pattern of thinking/being that we wish to change (24). Learning, from this point of view is accumulating knowledge and skills so that we can act more effectively. He asked, "Is there a different action of learning, which is not the accumulation of knowledge?" (25).

Krishnamurti and David Bohm (1980) agreed that the process of thinking and the contents of that thinking are part of the same movement. In the Modern Age we most often ignore the habitual process of fragmented thinking and concentrate of the topic of our thinking, fragmentation:

> *By accepting such a presumption we are led, in the next step, to seek some fantasy of action through efficient causes that would end the fragmentation in the content while leaving the fragmentation in the actual process of thinking untouched. What is needed, however, is somehow to grasp the overall* ***formative cause*** *of fragmentation, in which content and actual process are seen together, in their wholeness. . . . Similarly, when we really grasp the truth of the one-ness of the thinking process that we are actually carrying out, and the content of thought that is the product of this process, then such insight will enable us to observe, to look, to learn about the whole movement of thought and thus to discover an action relevant to this whole, that will end the "turbulence" of movement which is the essence of fragmentation in every phase of life. (Bohm, 1980: 18-19)*

Moving from fragmentation requires a shift in metaphor for describing reality. Scientists David Bohm (1980), Elisabeth Sahtouris (1989), and Mae-Wan Ho (as cited in Korten, 1999) all suggested the metaphor of the "dance"—the dance of life. Where the new physics, new biology, and Eastern philosophy intersect, the insight gained is of a universe of flowing energy and endless creativity. David Korten (1999) summarized this understanding:

> *Modern science has confirmed that ancient Hindu belief that all matter exists as a continuing dance of flowing energies. Yet matter is somehow able to maintain the integrity of its boundaries and internal structures in the midst of apparent disorder. . . . This ability implies some form of self-knowledge in both "inert" matter and living organisms at each level of organization. . . . To the extent that these premises are true, they suggest we have scarcely begun to imagine, much less experience, the possibilities of our own capacity for intelligent, self-aware living. Nor have we tested our potentials for self-directed cooperation as a foundation of modern social organization. . . . There is substantial evidence that it is entirely natural for healthy humans to life fully and mindfully in service to the unfolding capacities of self, community and the planet. . . . I gaze in awe at every object, rock, flower, insect, animal, and person—each engaged in the dance of life, constantly re-creating its every atom and molecule, each an integral participant in an epic journey of discovery by which a living universe seeks to know itself through renewal and transcendence. (12-13)*

The metaphor of the dance of life enables us to rejoin the process of thinking with the content of thinking. It does so by seeing these aspects of thinking as embedded in the process of creation and seeing the role of human consciousness to stand in awe, to wonder at that in which we are embedded. In short, the human role in the universe is to be the conscious self-awareness that celebrates the wonders of the universe. To play such a role, we are required to step outside of all the divisions and fragmentations that characterize human life. Krishnamurti (1982) suggested that our human consciousness is one whole but that we have programmed it into various divisions—religions, nationalities, cultures, genders, classes, and so forth. With these divisions comes conflict, which has created the modern crisis of fragmentation:

> *If the robots and the computer can do almost all that the human being can do, then what is the future society of man? . . . We are facing a tremendous crisis; a crisis which the politicians can never solve because they are programmed to think in a particular way—nor can the scientists understand or solve the crisis; nor yet the business world, the world of money. . . . The turning point is in our consciousness. . . . Consciousness is common to all mankind. Throughout the world man suffers inwardly as well as outwardly; there is anxiety, uncertainty, utter despair of loneliness; there is insecurity, jealously, greed, envy and suffering. Human consciousness is one whole; it is not your consciousness or mine—the images and symbols may be totally different in various localities but they stem from something common to all mankind. . . . If you do not begin to doubt, begin to question, . . . if you hold on to your own particular belief, faith, experience of the accumulated knowledge, then you will reduce it all to some kind of pettiness with very little meaning. . . . Can we be free of being programmed and look?*
>
> *How will you as a human being, who has evolved through millennia upon millennia, thinking as an individual—which is actually an illusion—face a turning point? Can you look at yourself—not as a separate human being but as a human being who is actually the rest of mankind? If you enquire seriously into what thinking is, then you enter into quite a different dimension—not the dimension of your own particular little problem. . . . To feel this total human sense that you are the rest of mankind requires a great deal of sensitivity. . . . It is not a problem to be solved . . . If you really look at it with your mind, your heart, your whole being totally aware of this fact, then you have broken the programme. (9-15)*

What all these theorists are encouraging is that we transcend our illusionary differences and fragmented living by embracing the commonness of human consciousness and the uniqueness of our place in the universe. This is a spiritual endeavour in which one "thinks" with the heart and experiences him/herself as profoundly embedded in the "all" that is timeless, not as separate individuals who suffer mortal life.

Part of this endeavour is embracing the larger stories by which to live our lives. Reality is not fully knowable, yet stories, as Charlene Spretnak (1997) said in Chapter Two, evoke communion with the deepest truths of existence and are the most powerful way of communicating. One such story is the cosmological universe story, including the story of our shared human consciousness. To see oneself and all that is around us as embedded in the dance of life is to see oneself and all that is around us as integrally part of what Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry (1992) called *cosmogenesis*. Cosmogenesis is the profound, dynamic creativity that has been continually bringing forth the universe ever since the primordial fireball; the forever expanding cosmic sea of energy, where reality is always developing, not static, on a universal level not just in our own region of space-time. In this way, life forms come into being as matter in the explicate order and then change back into energy and return to the implicate order that is part of the ongoing expanding universe.

There are countless ways in which we can experience the unfolding, enfolding universe (Bohm, 1980), the human consciousness (Krishnamurti, 1982), and the dance of life (Sahtouris, 1989) which give us glimpses of the sacred (the implicate order)—beyond all thought, time, space, measure, and division. This has profound implications for how we live individually and collectively, for it recovers our connectedness to the body, the natural world, and our "place." The dance of life, the cosmos story, and consciousness have much to do with transformation and learning.

For this study, then, the starting point for considering transformation is the undivided whole—not fragments of the whole or isolated aspects of the whole. The implication of this starting point is to humbly acknowledge that insights that may be gained about transformation and learning are only that—insights, not full reality; a provisional knowledge around which each reader must determine the validity.

This starting point has another implication—that all of life in the universe is part of an ongoing transformation. Sally talked of her life being part of one large transformation from stage to stage. This enabled her to put her changes into a perspective in which her process was shared by many others. If the course had gone a step further to tell the universe story, not only would she have transcended isolated individualism, but she would also have been able to articulate her connection to the dance of life, the continual transformation of the collective unconscious, and the continual transformation of the universe.

If matter is only an unstable, temporary arrangement of energy experienced in the explicate order which will eventually return to the implicate order (from which it never left), then the explicate reality (that which we can experience in some way) is not comprised of objects, but of processes of relationships. This leads to a radically different conception of the self, a conception that Selby (2000) called *radical interconnectedness*. The term *interconnectedness*, however, is still close to the web metaphor. So I shall call this different conception of the self *radical relatedness* to correspond more closely to the dance metaphor. Radical relatedness compels a much different ethic for living and working. Let us explore the implications of the dance of life metaphor and universe story in terms of this study.

HISTORICAL CONDITIONS AND ENTRY POINTS

I began this study by recounting the theories that portray a malaise in public discourse, a paralysis of citizen involvement, a naked public square, an anxious and narcissistic society, and a waning historical memory. This could certainly be one interpretation of the historical social conditions in which we exist. However, this interpretation was not fully supported by my preliminary thematic investigation and by in-depth interviews with the research participants. Let us recapitulate their reflections on the historical context in light of the new metaphor proposed above and discern where appropriate educational entry points for transformative learning may be found.

Living the Contradictions of Modernity/Postmodernity

As described in Chapter Four, the 1996 thematic investigation revealed that individuals, for the most part, clearly saw the dynamics of globalization, the promises made, and the power images felt. When I tested the strength of these ideological messages and images in 1997, the participants were not so seduced as to ignore the contradictory and often insidious faces of globalization. They had many questions about the impact on human health, quality of life, community security, and global justice and were deeply concerned about who, if anyone, was controlling the global direction. Many people related a sense of betrayal that they felt through job loss and overwork. Some were apologists and accepted the rationalizations, but particularly during this crisis of mass job loss, many perceived and lived the dissonance between messages. The participants had no trouble naming their employment dependence, the invasion of work that overshadowed other life priorities, and the perpetual anxiety fostered by the "continual change" ideology. Associated with each of these generative issues, they questioned personal control over self-preservation, profit bottom lines over people, and the assurance that change is inevitable and they just need to acquiesce by "doing their part."

Only when individuals are deeply threatened, as they were in the early 1990s, did they directly name the contradictions of the hegemonic messages. By 1998 the research class no longer exemplified this state of deep threat. Rather, they were trying to adjust to the changed structure of work wrought through restructuring, downsizing, and efficiency priorities. Through the interviews, it became clear why individuals want to be apologists and accept hegemonic rationalizations.

In this society, the individualism ideology has impressed upon citizens the control that they *ought to* exert over their own lives. The assumption deeply embedded in our social psyche is that we have control over ourselves—if nothing else, our state of mind—and it is each individual's responsibility to create his/her own success in life. Whether we consider politics, economics, or relationships, the societal message is that we can change these aspects of our lives, and our shared public lives, if we so choose.

The research participants struggled most with this "freedom of choice" message when they considered how little power they had to substantively impact the social and environmental crises they named as important. The primary contradiction they identified was the deep sense of personal responsibility to change what they didn't like or agree with and the sense of futility and impotence in attempting to make a significant difference. So, although they considered themselves to be individually responsible as citizens, they felt individually powerless to enact substantive change.

Can one be responsible if one does not have power? Popular psychology would say that power is a state of mind, and if individuals claim it, then they are being responsible. This, too, is the assumption in empowerment and transformation theory—that once individuals and groups change their mental framework, they will claim their power and work for change toward an ideal state of individual and social freedom. Yet, because of relational obligations at a personal level and the power of large institutions at a social level, the participants were clear that change was very, very difficult to undertake and perhaps nearly futile at the organizational and societal level. In fact, it was this struggle with futility that brought many of the participants into the course—they shouldn't feel futility, but they do—and they were searching for ways to claim their personal power for change. This is the vicious cycle of thought in which so many of the participants were caught that bred disillusionment and fragmentation.

Despite this vicious circle, most of the participants yearned for wholeness and for a deeply grounded way of living. In their own way they wanted to see the world in a positive light that emphasized the possibility of change. It was too devastating to see the constraints on their power to change, for this would be acknowledging that they had little power not only in society at large, but also over themselves. The key characteristic in numerous class discussions on social change was the pervasive belief that at least they can change themselves and, it is hoped, this will result in positive social change. Bellah et al. (1985) identified this core belief of North American culture some years ago:

> *We believe in the dignity, indeed the sacredness, of the individual. Anything that would violate our right to think for ourselves, judge for ourselves, make our own decisions, live our lives as we see fit, is not only morally wrong, it is sacrilegious. Our highest and noblest aspirations, not only for ourselves, but for those we care about, for our society and for the world, are closely linked to our individualism. (142)*

This understanding of individualism is of vital importance for all theories and educational practices that are based on a conflict theory of change, including social transformation theory. The research participants generally wanted to see harmony, not conflict; the positive, not the negative; and the power to change, not the constraints to change. They did not want to blame other individuals or institutions for their problems because that would imply that they were shirking individual responsibility and lacking individual power. Therefore, the language of domination, exploitation, oppression, marginalization, and solidarity has very little resonance with the middle class given that they are "responsible for their own fate." With their modest amount of social power, they ought to be able to provide for themselves and to have some impact in society, particularly at an organizational level. The middle class gravitates toward understandings, political and psychological, that enhance a way of seeing that promises further individual power. This is the attraction of Mezirow's (1991) transformation theory, for it advocates autonomous personhood. This is one of the primary formations of individualism in society—Lockean individualism, where the individual is prior to society (Bellah et al., 1985: 143).

When personal choice theory meets conflict theory in an educational context, conflict theory will be denounced by the learners for the lack of agency that it implies. When critical theorists suggest that this very denouncement illustrates how consciousness has been structured by dominant societal interests, the language of possibility and agency is lost in the loud defense of individual power and responsibility. What still lays below the surface, however, are the conflicting notions of individualism and the related ethics, too often taken for granted. Similarly, the conflicting assessments on the role of individualism in modern society rarely surfaces in public discussion.

Charles Taylor (1991) considered individualism as a "shutting out of greater issues or concerns" (1991). Borgman (1992) suggested that the centring on the self creates commodious individuals, and the lack of common purpose creates the naked public square. The other important implication is that the individual has become "the only or main form of reality" (Coles; as cited in Bellah et al., 1985: 143) blocking the connectedness and wholeness for which the participants were yearning and which they experienced, in small measure, in the course. In reexamining the participant discourse on disillusionment and fragmentation, a different understanding of individual power and responsibility emerges, as does new possibilities for transformative learning processes.

Disillusionment and Conflicting Ethics and Obligations

In all the major religious traditions and in several schools of thought such as existentialism and Marxism, losing one's illusions is a positive and necessary experience for human freedom and existential liberation. Although the participants considered disillusionment negatively, it was comprised of a web of conflicting obligations and ethics that provided rich humus for transformative learning. It is important to systematically go deeper in the analysis to determine whether this is primarily about midlife crisis or passages.

Typically, the mid-30s to mid-50s are considered a time when the loss of youth and the accumulation of difficult life experiences prompt a reevaluation of one's self and the beliefs held. Gail Sheehy (1974) suggested that individuals in their 20s are buoyed by powerful illusions and belief in the power of the will. They externalize their answers to "Who am I?" and "What is the truth?" as they develop their life structure. The vision that they hold of themselves and the world provides an energy to "leave home" and drives their activity to locate themselves within a peer group, a sex role, an occupation, and a worldview.

As the life structure derived from personal and career choices matures, Sheehy says a discontent sets in, particularly if the lofty goals of the 20s seem unreachable. In this "deadline decade" of the 30s when people near the halfway mark, the middle class survey their lived world of having settled down into a routine of climbing career ladders, paying mortgages, and perhaps raising children to address the surfacing questions of "Why am I doing all this?" and "What do I really believe in?" As individuals become aware that either they were too eager to conform to or to react against cultural conventions, the 40s become a time when individuals strive for authenticity in their goals for the second half of life. There is a disillusionment with the old dreams and a readjustment toward new goals, including the modification of illusions. The new emphasis typically evolves from a renewed spiritual searching and an interest in an ethical self beyond "narrow occupational and economic definitions" of self. The buried or shadow parts of the self seek integration and result in the development of an inner authority beyond established roles toward an authentic self.

In this understanding, disillusionment is considered the collision of dearly held beliefs, often prompted by the accumulation of life tragedies such as death, divorce, illness, and/or accidents. Whether individuals chose to follow the cultural model or react against it, Johnson (1999) suggested that these are both psychological "self-deals" or illusions designed to spare oneself troubles and tragedies. For instance, if one works at being a good person, following the rules, being the best in the chosen career field, creating an ideal marital relationship, or building a happy home, the expectation is that one will be spared. When this does not happen, disillusionment builds. The task, according to Johnson, is to divest oneself of external motivations and of long-held beliefs that are illusions.

At first blush, this elaboration of the midlife passage fits the experiences of the participants. Yet, there were many aspects of their personal turmoil and the larger social context that were unaccounted for. There is an important dialectic between individuals and culture, between social structures and individual agency that can augment this understanding of midlife passage. The illusions are both individually *and* socially generated, and just as the participants experienced disillusionment at the personal level, so can the illusions be unveiled at the social level.

Charles Taylor (1989) asserted that the basic human aspiration is to be connected to something that is considered of crucial importance or fundamental value. The "Who am I?" question of modernity is an identity question that is hinged to what each person defines of importance and expresses through their commitments and identifications. This "horizon" helps people determine what is good, valuable, and ought to be done, and what they endorse or oppose (Taylor, 1989: 27). The identifications or attachments can be formed by their moral or spiritual tradition, racial or national heritage, or any other tradition that helps determine what is of value. An "identity crisis" occurs when this horizon is lost and there is an uncertainty about "where they stand" and what is significant. Taylor convincingly argued that identity and this moral horizon are inextricably intertwined. To know who you are is to be oriented in moral space.

As alluded to, identity questions are uniquely modern questions. Premodern cultures prescribed universal moral horizons within which individuals understood themselves. However, the uniqueness of modernity is that each individual has the responsibility of finding his/her own moral horizon. Numerous complex and interacting traditions comprise modernity so that one's moral horizons can include contradictory orientations or what Taylor (1989) called "fractured horizons." So although various moral and ethical horizons preexist any individual, each individual uniquely takes up these various horizons in a way that makes sense individually within his/her contemporary cultural, social, and economic reality. What one individual considers moral and ethical may not valued by another individual, but they are still both oriented in a moral space. Yet, the need for these moral horizons is inescapable, according to Taylor. The key point is that not only are the moral horizons fractured between individuals, but also, as Taylor suggested, the moral conflicts of modern culture rage within each of us (106).

Transcendent Cosmology as Ethical Horizon

Anne's predominant cosmology was encapsulated in this statement:

> *I think I've always felt there is something beyond what I see in this life. . . . So I guess how I work with that in my own life is the belief that we are here for a purpose, and we are charged somehow . . . with the responsibility to live the best*

> ***way we can and to make the most out of your life, to try to be respectful of other people and not hurtful, but at the same time be respectful of yourself. That's all tied to spiritual well-being.***

Echoed in this statement are many strands of thought that have been developing from the time of the Ancient Greeks. First, present in this statement is the belief that there is a larger reality beyond the material world and beyond the human senses. Anne's references to spirituality bespeak a notion that this larger reality is one emanating from a Divine source, a source with the authority and right to "charge" humans with certain responsibilities. This sensibility of something more powerful than humans is a sensibility of the transcendent that has existed since the earliest record of human existence (Campbell, 1972). Through his analysis of the collective unconscious, Carl Jung has identified constant themes and principles throughout the history of human myths and legends. These myths and legends comprise a cosmology that orders a cultural world view and, consequently, a moral and ethical order. Anne, then, was conjoined with many millennia of human existence by being oriented to a reality beyond her material existence.

Anne was not the only participant who talked about a greater reality of Divine proportions. Indeed, most of the participants discussed their current spiritual searching and the Christianity to which they had been exposed as children—the ethical ideals as well as the failures of institutionalized religion. With the scientific skepticism that permeates society, they were wary of the competing theological doctrines founded on historical Christian "myths and legends." Nevertheless, what remained with them was the ethical base of Christianity and this sensibility of a greater reality. The searching then was for a spirituality that is inclusive, nonjudgmental, and manifested in ethical action. Most important, they were reaching for a coherent cosmology that would provide a sense of shared moral and ethical horizons, which they saw as currently lacking within society.

The Ethic of Service

As Campbell (1972) determined, the belief in a greater reality begets a further belief in a cosmic purpose for human Earthly existence. In Anne's case, this purpose was rooted in her Christian heritage in which God charges humans with responsibilities. In particular, the purpose is one of responsible stewardship in which humans are to care for each other and for Creation. She took up this responsibility and deeply integrated the Christian message through her commitment to live gently and to offer comfort and compassion to others, as well as to be mindful of her use of the Earth's resources. Without any specific doctrinal adherence beyond her absorption of some Christian ethics, she had chosen the lifestyle of many great spiritual leaders—a life of gentle and thoughtful service. The notion of *agape* most closely expresses her ontological stance—that of "seeing good" (Taylor, 1989: 516) through loving eyes. She clearly named this approach to life as spiritual, although she knew that this reference point is not accepted in society at large. This did not bother her, for she was comfortable knowing that this was the wellspring from which she drew and that she had a right to quietly believe in this as her moral horizon.

Anne's ability to feel comfortable about her Christian moral horizon in contrast to the other moral horizons around her was founded on the key modern belief in individual conscience. In modern liberal societies, people are accorded the right to determine their own convictions, which is the positive face of self-determining individualism. Personal liberty is the right upon which modern freedom stands. The correlating responsibility for the right of individual conscience is that she also had to show tolerance for the varying moral horizons around her. One of the values by which she lived was

> *tolerance: I think I recognize that I'm not the same as everybody else, and that doesn't bother me. . . . That is something that's important to me—to be able to care about somebody who's different from me and not try to make them the same as me.*

However, there was an apparent conflict between individual conscience and tolerance as she questioned whether it was her right to encourage her staff to emulate her philosophy of human dignity and her ethic of service or whether this overstepped the right of individual conscience and choice. She attempted to resolve this conflict by seeing the educational process as giving a democratic choice between two models of health care: "My hope is that by working with staff, I can model and teach and coach a larger group."

Historically, shared conviction and an ethic of service most commonly existed in religious and political organizations. However, in modern liberal societies, this is more often found in professional organizations which have rationalized a code of ethics among themselves. The sense of profession is related to the historical notion of a calling as it was shaped by early Protestantism. Harking back to Martin Luther, the concept of profession, vocation, and calling were synonymous (Applebaum, 1992). It was Calvin who took this one step further by suggesting that individuals needed to select their calling out of many, not simply to be satisfied with the social position and profession into which they were born. This gave mobility and fluidity to the social order based on professional self-selection, including the associated income/status level. Luther's and Calvin's notions provided the framework for modern vocational humanism (Troeltsch, 1981: 609).

Modern professionalism has retained some of these earlier aspects by fostering a community of like-minded people who hold a sense of service for the common good. Indeed, most professions nurture the sense that society can be bettered through their specialist knowledge which has been gathered, rationalized, codified, and transmitted through training (Walsh, 1987). In his writings, Emile Durkheim (1957) determined that it was professional organizations that support individual moralism as well as provide an ethical structure in society, in the absence of a monolithic moral horizon such as existed in medieval society. Durkheim asserted that professional organizations perform the role that guilds did in medieval times by regulating economic activity and maintaining social order founded on values that are not predominately economic.

Anne specifically stated that her idealism found its best expression in her profession and that this was a chosen avenue for her ethic of service. She stated that she had returned to her profession driven by her ideals and the potential for living out her ideals through her profession. Indeed, her profession provided the space for realizing her spirituality and enacting her ideals. Moreover, her calling gave her a sense of being connected to something of fundamental value within an organized community of shared convictions or within, at minimum, a community in which divergent convictions are part of an ongoing professional dialogue.

Not only can the professional organization give expression to one's highest ideals and convictions, but it has also become the primary vehicle for civic responsibility. Anne talked about doing in her job what she would otherwise do as a volunteer. Jennifer felt blocked from expressing her ideals and convictions within her job and talked about the possibility for a volunteer commitment that would give adequate expression to her convictions. Yet, neither person would seriously consider leaving her profession, but only her position, because they had projected their ethical horizons into their professions. Their profession provided the moral space within which they identified themselves and position the importance of what they do. Only when this is seriously blocked and personal health is in crisis do considerations of making a civic contribution outside this professional structure feebly surface.

Anne's question of "Why now?" was a crucial one, for this was not just an identity crisis as defined in typical midlife crisis theory. There was no uncertainty about where she stood and what was of significance for her. Rather, it was disillusionment with her professional training that created an illusion of efficacy and moral space. Anne, Jennifer, and other participants attached their orientation in moral space to their professional jobs, yet the ability to live out the ideals in the way that they deemed significant appeared illusionary. Five years ago they would not have seen the illusion, but the restructuring of the institutions in which they do their professional work catalyzed this realization. Therefore the illusion was that their ideals could be lived out through the existing professional structure. The challenge they faced was decoupling their social ideals from the professional organization or, more important, drawing a distinction between their professional communities and the institutional structures where they practice their profession.

Another source of Anne's disillusionment is the moral conflict between a vocation of service, the Protestant ethic, and utilitarianism. Her notion of professional service was founded on Luther's understanding of vocation as faithful service in the community and fulfilling a call. However, the purity of her profession was sullied by the bald use of business principles, management technologies, and political power within her profession. In fact, she described a talented colleague who did not attain a different management position because, as she was told, she was not adept at politics—a utilitarian assessment. Therefore the ethical horizon within her profession shifted toward overt utilitarian principles[36] by accepting business practices, yet her personal practice remained rooted in transcendent norms.

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[36] In classical utilitarianism (the principle where the right thing to do is what produces the most good, or, more accurately, the greatest happiness for the greatest number) individual rights and the social claims of minority groups are ignored if happiness and security have been procured for the majority of citizens. In this view, there is nothing that is intrinsically right or wrong to do; it can only be judged by its overall impact on the society. Virtues such

Working for the pleasure of working or for service to society is an out-of-date idea for utilitarians, for people are seen as only working for material rewards. Anne's ethic of service was outraged by the view that health care needs to provide benefits only for the majority with the least amount of effort and cost. She was perplexed by staff who assessed their jobs on a time cost/monetary benefit scale instead of viewing it from the perspective of participating in a profession of service.

Therefore, Anne wondered if her "Pollyanna" view of her profession was the illusion, if perhaps she had not seen the utilitarian basis that ran her profession until she had reached a management position. She wondered if she could make a difference only at the system level as she did at an individual patient level. This is an accurate observation, for excellence is not the goal in a utilitarian system, but the greatest good for the greatest number. If some are not served or fall by the wayside, that is of little consequence. Cost-benefit analysis skills are the valued skills. So, indeed, the rhetoric of excellence and innovation is an illusion that hides the utilitarian dynamics. Moreover, Max Weber (1992) suggested that this professional ethic of doing one's duty in a calling is useful and of great utility in a capitalistic culture. Professional commitment means that individuals will work long, hard, and selflessly and not expect any additional income or status.

In support of Anne's stance that the acceptance of business principles dictates against "doing a good job," Durkheim (1957) asserted that business and industry exist in a moral vacuum given that there are no moral and ethical parallels to professional organizations moderating the impact of ambition and greed. His concern was that if such organizations did not develop, the stability of society would be threatened by the anarchic competition of the marketplace and negative social impacts (15):

> *If a sense of duty is to take strong root in us, the very circumstances of our life must serve to keep it always active. . . . If we follow no rule except that of a clear self-interest, in the occupations that take up nearly the whole of our time, how should we acquire a taste for any disinterestedness, or selflessness or sacrifice? Let us see, then, how the unleashing of economic interests has been accompanied by a debasing of public morality. (12)*

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as justice or service then are subordinate to the principle of expediency, wherein it is expedient to permit losses or injustice in the context of gains for the majority (Lebacqz, 1986). A market society as well as a liberal society operates by maximizing utilities—so that people get the satisfactions and happiness they want with the least effort.

Anne's struggle with disillusionment was seeing divergent ethical horizons operating in her profession. When one works according to a code of ethics that conflicts with the ethics operational in one's workplace, a difficult dilemma arises. In Anne's case it involved a spiritual search to examine her motivations and to find a safe place to lodge her convictions. Durkheim (1957) claimed that modern societies have transformed medieval loyalty into patriotism to the State and commitment to professional organizations. Perhaps the spiritual searching that is currently flowering is a reverse process of shifting loyalties back from one's profession and the State to a higher reference point outside of corruptible and disillusioning human institutions.

The Ethic of Social Justice

Just as Anne's reference point for enacting her convictions was her profession, Sally's reference point was the State and its obligation for equality, justice, and serving the poor. Part of Sally's orientation was revealed in these statements:

> *When I'm in a class at my work site, and I see the finery there, I don't feel equal. How can these little children feel equal? . . . There's a lot of disparity here in this country. . . . That's what a government is all about: they're to govern. They're not to be money managers. And what has happened to our health care? And education? So, I think [the poor] are questioning and wondering, 'Where are they in this position that can chop and grind and throw away and fling to the four winds? . . . A wounded people is what I see. Wounded people.*

Having been raised in the inner city and living with the stigma of being in a single-mother family, Sally was keenly aware of gender, class, and power issues. In her work and in her community, she witnessed poverty and need daily. Her sense of justice was firmly rooted in a Christian understanding of *social* justice, in which the inherent worth and dignity of all people necessitates state intervention to ensure that the "common good' is served. This is distinct from the greatest-good principle in utilitarianism, because it judges the common good from the perspective of the poorest, not the majority. In a particularly Catholic understanding of justice,

> *the underlying principles is that all creation is given for humankind; therefore each has the right to basic necessities . . . and all other rights whatsoever, including those of property and of free commerce, are to be subordinated to this principle. . . . The vision of justice is a vision grounded in a sense of solidarity, mutual responsibility, and joint benefit. (Lebacqz, 1986: 70)*

Such a vision calls for broad social participation of all citizens in society—economically, politically, and socially. Therefore, because the poor, particularly the children, are unable to fend for themselves, it is encumbent on the State through professionals to care for them. Sally's notion of service, then, was the State serving its citizens by creating conditions of equality and justice in the name of human dignity.

A similar notion of justice is also firmly planted in the liberal welfare tradition. Macpherson (1965) suggested that the essence of both the liberal society and the market society is competition—competition between individuals free to choose what to do with their energies and skills and free to choose who to authorize to make laws providing economic and social regulation. The idea of democracy in this sense is not rule by and for the poor or the common people as might be inferred above; rather, it is the right to get into the competition. Therefore, to enable equality of opportunity, transfers of public wealth have been used to provide more open access to health, education, pensions, and special services such as social assistance to protect people when they fall on hard times. Poverty is not seen as the result of ignorance or individual failing, but as the result of the vagaries of the market system. The social gospel movement played a key role in influencing the establishment of such programs. For this reason, the Christian values of compassion, equality, justice, and human dignity were elided under liberal democratic values. This elision characterizes Sally's orientation.

This elision harbours a substantive ethical conflict, however, particularly as the social liberalism platforms of the 1960s and 1970s have been dismantled. Sally continued to see it as the purview of the professional class and the government to enact equality, justice, and democracy on behalf of the vulnerable, the wounded. With the implementation of neoliberal policies, she charged that both the state and professionals are exacerbating the justice issues in this society. She saw the professionals as perpetuating inequalities, most notably through their self-interested practices and "conspicuous consumption." Similarly, the State demonstrates a lost sense of obligation by the injustices promoted by utilitarian policies that do not mind if some are "ground up and flung to the winds." She challenged professionals individually and the State collectively to live up to the ideals that undergird a liberal welfare society and a professional ethic of obligation to the vulnerable, not realizing that a utilitarian liberal society is not fundamentally concerned with dignity for all, but with ensuring that the majority can compete. Again, her disillusionment was not just a midlife identity crisis, but an explicit social critique in which she assessed the failure of the welfare state and chastised the utilitarian thinking of the neoliberal state for turning away from justice and equality.

The moral conflict raging within her was the desire to become professionalized so that her voice was legitimated and she could "right" the profession. Similarly, it was to increase her own income and status to participate in class mobility. Herein lies the material contradiction between those who wish to serve the marginalized in society and the separation from the marginalized that is established both in income and status as they become professionalized. This position of "comfortable caring" from within a professionalized position is a position of fragmentation, for the professional is at once in defense of his/her professional income/status rewards as well as trying to overcome the institutional strictures to serve the "clientele" most effectively.

Likewise, Ivan Illich (1977) proposed that professionalization as presently constructed is a product of the industrial era to generate monopolies of knowledge and control. Sally keenly felt this monopoly of which she was not a part, yet she considered that she had more knowledge of what the issues were and what could effectively be done than the professionals had, given their "professional distance." She retained her sense that she was caring for the children in her charge, not instrumentally assessing the problems and prescribing educational antidotes. Yet, given the professional monopoly over this service, Sally had few other choices open to her for making an effective contribution. Her burnout was directly related to this Catch-22 situation in which she found herself. She saw the illusions in professionalization, but she was hungry to see the work of her hands produce something meaningful, for her ideas to be valued, and for her contributions to help create a society of justice. Her midlife crisis then was not just learning to come into her own power and authenticity, but it was also finding a community in which to hinge her ethic of justice, her sense of compassionate obligation to the marginalized, and the control to enact it meaningfully.

The Ethic of Social Contracts

Kate's normative and cognitive orientation toward her work was in flux and was encapsulated in the following statement:

> *I want my employer to recognize me as an individual with needs and to work with me to ensure the working is meeting my needs so we both benefit. . . . My ideal like for my position [is] you should have some clear objectives of "this is your role, this is what you are supposed to do." And that needs to be recognized in the organization.*

Kate also carried the same sense of professionality as Anne and Sally did. "I think I feel a sense of purpose when I am doing something that clearly benefits others. I feel a sense of pride and accomplishment if I can truly be of service to someone." She also described her intimations of a transcendent cosmology—that she was "supposed" to be doing something that she had not yet identified. Originally, she chose her profession because "it reflected my values of home, family, and rural life." She was drawn to work with her present corporate employer because it gave her a chance to operationalize her professional training and these values. "I wanted to help rural families with basic life skills." Working with this company also gave her "a sense of self and identity." Finally, her notion of success meant "being financially secure."

So Kate entered into a contract with her employer as a system of tradeoffs. With her very strong Protestant work ethic, her role was to work hard and "buy into" the corporate mandate as her own in exchange for financial security, a professional identity, and a way to express her values. For her, the contract was that there is a clear sense of commitment on the part of both parties—employee and employer. According to her, this ought to be demonstrated by the employer providing a clear job role and recognition of her needs and contributions. As the employee, she would produce to the best of her ability, and dictate the production of others if required, for the benefit of the company. The "human side of things" did not meaningfully enter into the contractual arrangement outside of the corporation understanding her intentions for entering into this contract.

Kate's conception of her relationship to her employer was based on an early modern notion of social contract. The notion of social contract as recast by Rousseau is one in which individual citizens suppress their natural liberty and enter into a social contract in order to acquire civil liberty, a higher state of freedom. Although people retain the freedom to be self-determining, they moderate their actions within the parameters of the collective will. Another notion of social contract, from Hobbes, was the patriarchal notion in which just as the family relinquish their power to the father, and the subjects to a monarch, so citizens relinquish their power to the government. In a Hobbesian compact, the government has the right of obedience and the responsibility to protect the citizens. Conversely, the citizens have the right of protection and the responsibility of obedience to the collective will.

Kate's notion of social contract combined both Rousseau and Hobbes. She saw herself as entering freely into the relationship, and she expected a degree of professional autonomy or self-determination in her work, but within clear parameters dictated by the patriarchal powers. She acquiesced her own power to upper management—"the old boys' club"—by trusting their determination of the functions that needed to be filled and their understanding of how best to coordinate the functions. Now, however, her trust in this contract had been breached in numerous ways, making her tenure difficult. This lack of trust rotated on her notion of mutual commitment: "I strongly believe that commitment is very important. . . . [The] stress and frustration in my job is . . . that I see so many people—an entire organization really—without a clear sense of commitment.

She questioned the patriarchal determination of how best to provide the service. She believed that utilities are a basic service that ought to be provided for the common good as well as be conserved as much as possible, yet she saw the political games that manipulate this service for the profit bottom line. She questioned "everything for economic gain" because it violated her notion of service for the common good. "I keep thinking about purpose, purpose of work, and I sort of analyze everything I do based on this: Who's benefiting?" She talked about the profits of her company, the breaks given to big industrial customers, and how residential people bear the greatest burden for rate increases but do not have the clout to fight the system. "I have a problem with how it all works; I don't agree with what it is." She realized that her integrity was at stake by participating in a company that did not have the common good as its goal. She had never realized this fundamental conflict until she was put into a position to see the behind-the-scenes manipulation.

Kate also considered the patriarchy as having violated the contract by not rationalizing the functions and thereby not providing a useful role for her. Her original function that gave expression to her professional training and personal values now was only given "lip service." "I guess what I'm finding is that there's no priority on that stuff that doesn't make any money." Her position was reorganized and loosely associated with a money-making function that she found purposeless and to which she did not wish to attach her identity. She also saw the exploitation that occurs through a work ethic that expects long hours of overtime work with no pay. She flatly refused to continue this professional charade because of her children. In discussion with another employee exhausted from the overtime hours and a young family, she said:

> *I just decided it isn't worth it. . . . [I told him,] "If we don't raise it [as an issue], no one ever will"—just to sort of give him the idea that we don't have to just accept this, right? At times, I even feel exploited.*

The company then was not respecting employee's needs for family time or giving an honest day's pay for an honest day's work, and her unquestioning obedience to the corporate mandate was no longer a given because she saw herself on the losing end of the contract.

The only part of the contract that had not been violated was the corporation's providing general financial security. This was the last connection to the corporation that kept her uncertain. "They pay damn good! . . . People are going to think I'm nuts. Here I have this dream job, four days a week, excellent pay, and I'm going to quit? What an idiot, right?" Even with the increasing hours, the financial security was important to her and her husband's sense of independence, including the ability to retire early. Again, this is not just about a midlife crisis, but also about being caught in an ethical dilemma between being responsible for one's family, feeling responsible for the common good, and maintaining personal integrity.

The Ethic of Good Intentions

Ky and Garth also viewed their work as employees of large bureaucracies or corporations, public or private, as part of a contract. However, both of them were very explicit that they would enter into a contractual relationship only if they were free to act on their ethics. For both of them, their intentions and the intentions of the employer had to match if they were going to enter into a contractual relationship. Ky left classroom teaching because she saw her intention of meeting every student's need as not corresponding to the utilitarian intention of the school system to provide for the majority only. When she saw the financial manipulation that stole resources from the children already struggling, she became disillusioned by the "lack of ethics." She lost her respect given the disjuncture of intention. She likely would have stayed within the school system if the intentions were similar but could not be met given external factors. The factors, however, were internal and controllable, and she could make no apology for the "system."

Garth's experience was similar. He gave up on working in a salaried position for large corporations for the simple reason that they were "dealing in bad faith. " His new employer stated the intention of seeking mutual advantage with employees, and it appeared to be an intention that they shared. Yet, it became apparent that the mutual advantage approach was "lip service," rhetorical, not substantive, on the part of the employer. The illusion was clear and so was Garth's decision to leave. He had to end his internal conflict as the intermediary between the employer's bad faith and an employee's distress at losing his/her job. He too could make no apology for the "system."

Therefore, even though Ky distanced herself from school systems with divergent intentions, she still understood herself as a professional educator, and she remained committed to the noble ideals found within her profession. Ky's and Garth's fundamental orientation was Kantian, in which people should always be treated with respect and never be used as a means to goals. "[With our children] we stress not using people, like the whole throwaway society—that we don't throw away people." Kant (as cited in Hinman, 1994) stated, "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end" (213).

First, Kant (as cited in Hinman, 1994) understood respect as not taking away the conditions of moral agency or autonomy from other people. All people have the right to think and act for themselves (209). Respect also recognizes the intrinsic worth of each individual. If people have absolute value as Kant suggested that they should have, they have dignity and therefore cannot be replaced or be for sale. They are ends in themselves.

Second, Kant stressed that all human beings ought to have fundamental self-respect as well as be accorded the respect of others. People must recognize their own moral rights and the autonomy they have to act on their own moral intentions.

What both Ky and Garth discovered through these work experiences, which profoundly violated their ethic of good intention and therefore their self-respect, was bureaucratic instrumentalism. As Weber (1946) described, bureaucracies are rational organizations with gradations of authority in which the functions are governed by rules and functionaries with expert training. Employees are chosen for their training and usefulness in disinterestedly carrying out the functions of the bureaucracy. Weber suggested that bureaucracies have been a superior form of organization, a machine-like organization, given its smooth coordination of tasks, calculable rules, and disinterestedness or impartiality in the application of rules (214).

Necessary to a bureaucracy, though, is an instrumentalist view of humans used to achieve a goal outside of themselves. "Without regard for individual persons" is the key attribute of a bureaucracy both in its dispatch of its functions and its view of those who work within. These functionaries are to be "personally detached and objective experts unmoved by personal sympathy, favour, grace or gratitude" (Weber, 1946: 216). In this way, bureaucracies replaced systems of organization founded on favour, tradition, honour, or personal connection. However, in the bureaucratic instrumentalist view, humans have only relative value and therefore *can* be replaced, bought, and sold. There is no essential dignity accorded employees; they are simply functionaries, or rather tools. This was what so offended Ky and Garth. No matter how they tried to transform this, there was a fundamental disjuncture between viewing humans as having dignity and humans as having instrumental usefulness.

In this regard, employees and employers within a bureaucratic organization engage in a property contract not a social contract, in which once they are part of the organization, they give up their moral autonomy to the dictates of the organization in exchange for financial reward. This was what Ky and Garth mean when they said, "Big organizations own your soul," for if people's identities are intrinsically related to their position in a moral space, then if they give up their moral space and hence their identity to the ethics and collective identity dominant in the organization, they have given up an essential part of themselves, their moral autonomy or "soul." Ky and Garth explained that people are willing to do it, are willing to turn a blind eye to this reality, in order to retain the pay cheque. For them it is just a necessary part of the contract. Yet, what makes the person unique and morally autonomous has been subordinated to the bureaucracy, until they retire.

People try to overcome this instrumentality in a workplace through loyalty to their colleagues and as Anne observed, "[Work] becomes sort of a social support system." For this reason, she was loath to leave her position given her loyalty to her closest colleague, whose vision she shared. Gena chose to respond to her bosses as individuals, hoping that if she treated them with dignity, they would respond in kind. She believed that change happens individually, and if the bosses learned how to treat their staff with dignity, the workplace issues would be resolved. Yet, the larger utilitarian framework within which both Anne and Gena worked and the contradictions that it entailed were not conscious to those involved, and these efforts were continually frustrated. This was also why Heather had so much difficulty leaving her worksite despite the illegalities in which she was implicated, for she cared about creating difficulties for those around her. Yet, what her experience demonstrated was that "there's a warm body that hits that chair so fast you wouldn't believe it!" People are replaceable tools.

The second vital tie that keeps people in their jobs is the financial remuneration which all of them need and which keeps many people "stuck" in their jobs. The third tie is the perennial human hope that change is possible for, again, as Anne put it, "That's what keeps me there. It's not as simple as saying, 'Get out; it's totally sick.'" Each of them saw that they had a measure of freedom: some say in decisions, some rewards, and a good enough income to justify staying there even though they may have been profoundly frustrated, disillusioned, or ethically compromised. So, despite the instrumentality that is present in most work organizations, particularly in a market society in which people need to market their labour, these are the apologies employed by those who value people over functions even though they themselves are treated as functions. Again, this is not a midlife crisis, but an ethical crisis in the era of modern work.

The Ethic of Living a Responsible Life

What moral horizon is encapsulated within the white picket fence image? For Dan, the white picket fence symbolized the ethic of living a responsible life:

> *I will do the right thing because it's the right thing to do, not because an outside agency tells me to. My life purpose is to be a good person, good father, good friend. It has little or nothing to do with my work or a greater purpose. . . . I work to live, so that I can do the things that I want to when I'm not at work. . . . In conclusion, my purpose in life is to be the most complete me I can be, to live the ideals I believe in, to have a calmness or oneness with the world I live in, and to try and pass on a sense of self-love to my children.*

For Dan being a good person meant being a responsible person, and for him that was comprised of living the virtues of "honesty, integrity, loyalty, commitment, and fairness." His life was guided by this "inner compass" of what makes a good life, and this was measured primarily by how well he lived these virtues or, in other words, developed his character. He was the true humanist who values these virtues as the potential of a full human life, not as religious dictates from a transcendent cosmology. Humanists drink from many wells of the human spirit that possess an ethical profundity. They celebrate the noble expressions of the human soul, particularly human imagination, intelligence, and creativity. Human dignity and self-respect are the cornerstones of humanism, not because of any connection to a transcendent, but as a celebration of human uniqueness. These are the virtues that Dan wished to pass onto his children.

Accordingly, Dan had not invested his work with any transcendental purpose beyond enough challenge and fulfillment to make his days enjoyable and give a sense of honor to his work. "[I was taught] that work was honorable. . . . The purpose of working is to provide the means by which you can do the things you want to do. . . . It should challenge you, and it should make you to some degree happy." Dan did not consider that his responsibility extended beyond the sphere that he could most effectively influence, what he called the "huge family bubble." He did not harbour a sense of mission for addressing larger social issues either through his work or in a volunteer capacity. He considered his work in instrumental terms in which it is simply a means to live a responsible life. He considered civic involvement to be doing one's duty in the electoral process as well as through volunteer capacities related to his children. His contribution to a good society, therefore, was to be the best that he could be and to teach his children well.

This orientation harks back to two ethical sources. One of Luther's primary contributions was the affirmation of the ordinary life. For Luther, the most honorable way of life was that of the ordinary person—in his day, the peasant and craftsperson—rather than those living a monastic life (as in the Medieval Age) or those participating as responsible citizens in the *polis* or public life (as in Ancient Greece). The simplicity of work, particularly the work of one's hands, and the ordinary duties of family life were revered as the most honorable and pure way of life, including the most honorable way to serve one's community. At this time, conceptions of marriage were transformed to see marriage as the highest expression of community, where the love and companionship in family life are one of the purest spiritual expressions and where such expressions anticipate what is possible for society. For Luther, this celebration of the ordinary life was the most honorable way to glorify God.

However, for Dan the humanist, living one's everyday life with honor does not require Divine sanction or transcendental acknowledgement for it to be meaningful or good. The heroism for him existed in the discipline, duty, and ideals that people enact in their lives. Dan's stance was part of a larger societal orientation in which the meaning of life is a "flourishing life" (Taylor, 1996: 11). It is the search for something "fuller, deeper and higher" within ordinary life that bestows meaning (Taylor, 1996: 10). There is another ethical source alluded to in Dan's quotation and in conversations with other participants. One's purpose is to live responsibly, but also the reverse: that it is each one's responsibility to find one's purpose, to fulfill the potential of one's life. For Anne, it was "to make the most out of your life"; and for Dan it was 'to be the most complete me I can be." Woven into such statements is Aristotle's concept of the *telos*, in which each living thing has a purpose that continuously unfolds as it moves toward its full realization or actualization. This teleological process is powered by an indwelling impulse toward a perfect state. This Aristotelian view is echoed in the Christian tradition, in which each person has a divine destiny they are to discover as a way to move progressively closer to union with God, the perfect form and final purpose. This informed Anne's thinking. However, Aristotle's *telos* also informs much of the humanist self-actualization and human potential movements, which often delete a notion of the Divine and focus on a perfect human form toward which an indwelling spirit is directed. It was this humanist version of the *telos* that informed Dan's thinking.

What does it mean to be the most we can be? This search is the search for authenticity that has been written about so extensively in the midlife transition literature. One primary aspect of authenticity is self-fulfillment, not in the hedonistic or narcissistic sense, although these are certainly some of its derivatives, but where one progressively finds one's uniqueness through a self-definitional process. Taylor (1971) argued that there is a powerful moral ideal at work in the desire for self-fulfillment: "The point is that today many people feel *called* to do this, feel they ought to do this, feel their lives would be somehow wasted or unfulfilled if they didn't do it" (17; *emphasis in original*).

As a child of the Romantic period, authenticity was considered the "inner voice" of one's moral intuitions (Tarnas, 1991: 368; Taylor, 1991: 26). Therefore, coming to know the depths of this inner voice is to become fully human, to be fulfilled. One of the Romantic thinkers, Herder (as cited in Taylor, 1991), further suggested that each individual has his/her original way of being in the world and that each person is to discover what is his/her unique way of being—for to live an imitation is to miss "what being human is for me" (Taylor, 1991: 29). And as Taylor explained, this ideal of authenticity travels together with the ideal of self-determining freedom—encouraging individuals to break away from all external impositions and decide for oneself how one ought to live, in accordance with what is uniquely them. The task then is to discover one's individual potentiality and fulfill it.

What is most interesting about the moral pull of authenticity is that all else can become subject to this ideal. For instance, although work was honorable for Dan, it was still a means to an end—an instrumental means to the end of fulfilling authenticity and the goodness of family life. Dan's disillusionment came from the conflicts between these moral ideals. There is an implicit contradiction between seeking personal authenticity and honoring family life, as depicted in the white picket fence scenario. The other is the contradiction between being seen as responsible by conforming to societal measures of success (what he called *external measures*) and finding one's own measure of fulfillment *(internal measures)*. Dan sensed that there was something that was not "working right" or something that was "missing" in his ability to negotiate these contradictions, and he intuitively named this as *spiritual*.

The first contradiction articulated by Dan was between the demands of family duty and the demands of being true to oneself:

> *If your family life is so important to you that that's what is important, could you be a bricklayer for forty years and work six till five every day at a job you hate to put your kids through college? Or at the end of that, do you come out hating your kids? Not hating your kids, but resenting what you had to do? . . . I will not let that happen. . . . Yes, that's honorable, and I can see that he put his children first and that this is what was important to him. But at the same time I also think how sad to close off all the other facets. Maybe [it] wasn't [his] dream to be a steelworker. And because of your kids, you couldn't do it. And I imagine in those situations people must find nourishment in the other areas of their life.*

That Dan wanted to pursue his personal goals through a new line of work while filling his familial responsibilities was not narcissism or hedonism, but the powerful ideal of authenticity that is buried deeply in the modern psyche. Rather than disregard his ties to his family, he regarded his family responsibilities as an essential aspect of his search to be as "complete" as he could be, to explore as many facets of his being as possible.

Dan was well aware that the desire to fulfill his dreams might at times have conflicted with other visions he had for his life, particularly his definitions of being a "good father, good son, and good friend." He wished to live a life of honor, and that is doing one's duty in the most intimate relationships. Yet, steadfastly remaining true to himself, he would not let the resentment about being restrained in pursuing his goals at this very moment build up, in this case against his children. What he intuited that he was missing was a larger "horizon of significance" in which each of these responsibilities "fit" rather than conflict, for it is these horizons that are the moral guides in our lives and therefore can indeed be designated "spiritual." Within Dan's existing moral horizon, these desires for authenticity and responsibility could and did conflict.

A second dimension of this contradiction is between authenticity and conformity. As Dan elaborated, societal notions of success are predominately monetary and consumptive measures, external measures. In the culture at large, the material life expresses one's authenticity. One's authenticity is demonstrated by the "style" of product choices. Authenticity is a "lifestyle" in the most material sense, and one's income ought to provide for enough choice in finding the "lifestyle" most expressive of one's authenticity. In this way, one's job is a key factor to expressing one's authenticity. The white picket fence, also a material expression, expresses family responsibility. One is not responsible if one does not supply a single family dwelling on its own lot fenced from other property, a car, vacations, lessons, and all the accoutrements that go with each. Yet, Dan sensed that there was more, that there should be an internal measure of living well.

In Fromm's (19__) formulation of the "having" and "being" modes of existence, being has been collapsed into the having so that having *is* being. "Having" has become the art of full living. Fromm took this further to suggest that the "having" orientation does not have to be expressly material, for one can be in an acquisitive stance toward other people, virtues, knowledge, status, or any other aspect of life. It is this that troubled Dan—that conformity in acquisition poses as authenticity. He felt a deep desire to withdraw from material conformity toward a much simpler life focussed on the relationships themselves rather than the material things which symbolize the relationships. The sense of living well in relationships outside of the having mode was becoming his internal measure of authenticity.

The second aspect of this conflict between conformity and authenticity is the role of one's work or career as an expression of authenticity. Paid work outside the home is also considered an expression of one's authenticity. This paid work is not just any labouring job such as a steelwork or bricklaying, or any unpaid and low-status job such as parenting, but some form of work that expresses who one is. In Luther's formulation, "how" you did the work given to you was the important aspect, not the work itself. Not so any more. Authenticity pushes against being "stuck" in a job that one has inherited, that significant others have desired for you, or that is constrictive. Job mobility is expected as one searches for a degree of freedom, creativity, control, ongoing education and, of course, income which expresses one's authenticity. Hence, both Ky and Kate discussed being unable to "work for umpteen years in the same job and collect the gold watch before retiring" scenario. This scenario offends the search for authenticity.

Ironically then, the overt search for authenticity that has been associated with the midlife crisis is conformist in its search for expression and has tied millions of people to consumption and jobs in their search for fulfillment. Culturally, people are expected to search for their authenticity in their work lives and relationships. Yet, existing jobs and relationships become suspect as less than authentic expressions and as potential blockages to the search for authenticity. It is this subjective self-centredness that many see as responsible for, at worst, atomistic, narcissistic, and therefore irresponsible behaviour, and at best, expressive individualism. Yet, as Taylor (1991) suggested, the search for authenticity may slide to these trivialized forms, but underneath is a search for an authenticity that is significant, and it can be significant only against a horizon that is larger than oneself. This notion shall be discussed further in the next chapter on the desire for transformation.

Findings From an Ethical Analysis of Disillusionment

In Chapter Six, questions were posed about the measure of one's life and the connection to midlife crisis. The Harwood Group (1996) suggested that less stress, reduced materialism, and more time with family and friends would increase the sense of fulfillment. This analysis has revealed findings that go far beyond individual midlife crises and beyond prescriptions for individual change. Implicit in this analysis has been the discovery that much of the midlife passage literature is confused about what Bohm (1980) called "the different and the same." Chapter Six discussed disillusionment with doing a good job, as a violation of ethics, with the importance of work and material things, and with public life. Through an ethical analysis, the following findings surfaced.

Finding #1: The first finding is that disillusionment is about ethical conflicts that exist on a society-wide level and are manifested at the individual level. These conflicts have been emerging throughout modernity as evident by reference back to pre-Enlightenment and Enlightenment thinkers, but specific conflicts have taken precedence in this period of late modernity. As Richard Tarnas (1991) and Charles Taylor (1991) have noted, a dominant unitary moral and ethical horizon no longer exists, and the current confusion stems from a loss of a common language and shared symbolic system.

Finding #2: The first conflict identified by Kate and Dan was the lack of a cosmological coherence. Transcendent and a humanist cosmologies coexist. The scientific and religious cosmologies are no longer satisfying for the majority of the participants. The spiritual search that is currently flowering and is expressed by the participants can be seen as the search for broader moral and ethical horizons out of which to judge aspects of their lives and in which to end the warring between competing ideals.

Further, it is clear that individuals are not aware of the competing ethical horizons operational within or outside themselves, all of which are considered valid. Interestingly, the participants were not searching for an epistemological rationale for dealing with their disillusionment, but they generally articulated it as a spiritual search—a search inward, toward the depths of being, and beyond, to "locate themselves" within a larger cosmological horizon. This makes sense, for cosmologies support a specific moral order as discussed in Chapter Two. The inward spiritual search is also indicative of the desire for reenchantment which moderates the instrumentality that so dominates late modernity. In this way, they do not have to measure aspects of life only by their use-value, but also by their cosmic or sacred value. The metaphysical intuition that a unifying or ultimate principle can exist colors much of the participants' language and concepts.

Finding #3: A related conflict identified is the lack of an ontological coherence about human existence and its significance. Yearning to make a difference is the search to find the significance of existence—either in service to humanity or through virtues such as loyalty to family, friends, and colleagues. Reducing human existence down to property relations, instrumentalism, utility, or bureaucratic efficiency is an affront to their sense of existential significance. Yet they are constrained from making a difference through enacting these virtues because of these dominating ethics in their workplaces.

Finding #4: There is an increasing loss of space to speak or act on their ethics in their workplaces. Most participants, particularly in professional lines of work, had chosen their worksites as the primary vehicle for "making a difference" in society. They saw their work as providing the moral and ethical space within which they identified themselves and positioned the importance of what they do. In other words, they had projected their ethical horizons and identity as moral beings into their profession or position. Their jobs acted as the vehicle for their civic responsibility. Yet, the possibility for ethical autonomy was the illusion.

Ethical autonomy in the workplace was compromised in six ways. First, many participants had a service ethic toward society that was founded on relationality to those they served. Yet they worked in large bureaucracies organized by rationalism, mechanistic coordination, and personal detachment. Second, this service ethic was also compromised by utilitarian ethics, in which providing good service and honoring the mutuality of commitments to staff takes a back seat to organizational politics and/or the business of profits. Third, many workers, from managers to support staff, are now expected to adopt a utilitarian ethic that focuses on cost-benefit efficiencies. This flies in the face of programs intended to provide social goods, whether to children in the education system, to the ill and dying in the health system, or to the clientele of basic services such as utilities. Fourth, some participants talked about the organization "owning their soul," where, to receive a pay cheque and professional identity, they had to give over their ethical autonomy and personal identity to the collective ethics and identity of the organization. When they exposed practices or offered alternatives, they were silenced or lost their jobs. These are the workings of property contract ethics as part of a market society, and this compromises the ethics of good faith or good intention, as Kant (as cited in Hinman, 1994) called it. Fifth, many participants experienced a disjuncture between viewing their colleagues as having intrinsic dignity and viewing humans as having instrumental usefulness—where people are be bought, improved, or sold as tools. These ethical conflicts that raged within the participants and within their work relationships partially constituted the experience of disillusionment or "losing one's illusions."

Finding #5: An internal ethical conflict for some of the participants was the desire for authenticity and the desire to be responsible in their relationships. The desire for authenticity is material in that it is often expressed by one's vocation and by one's purchased lifestyle. The desire to live a responsible life affirms the virtues of an ordinary life and the importance of one's relationships. These desires are conflicting by creating an opposition between self-fulfillment and relational responsibility and between self-determining freedom and conformity to culturally accepted measures of success. Fromm (1976) summarized the above conflicts as the conflict between having and being. Authenticity has become an issue of having a meaningful job and material things that express your unique self. Living a responsible life is measured by external material acquisitions. As Dan intuited, these desires may not be conflicting if there is a shift to "being" which would offer a larger horizon of meaning beyond the self as well as an internal measure of living well.

Finding #6: Although society may be typified as passive and narcissistic, the participants were unanimously troubled by shutting out larger social issues from their daily lives. They felt responsible for the larger social and environmental issues around them. Yet, professional ethics often demand silence, or they are prevented from acting on their ethics within work organizations. Fragmented media views offer no clear choices for action that could create substantive change. Therefore, although they were sincerely concerned and troubled, there was a sense of futility and cynicism that meaningful action by individuals is not possible in the face of the complex and deep changes needed to be made in larger systems. This is not the passive acceptance of corporatist agendas as Saul (1995) would suggest, but a troubled anxiety that sees no efficacious options and affords little spaces for citizen engagement outside of work commitments.

What this affirms is Weber's (1946) view that the rule of bureaucracy is opposed to democracy (231, 242). As the reach of bureaucratic authority increases within society, it seeks to minimize the "sphere of influence of public opinion" that would threaten the power, special knowledge, and rational efficiencies of those inside the bureaucracy. Within this conflict between the dynamics of bureaucracy and democracy there has been a loss of collective conscience, of common purpose around which to organize action, and the impotence of individual power to act as autonomous moral agents. Moral self-direction is inimical to bureaucratic dynamics, and workplace demands are becoming so heavy that there is little space outside of bureaucratic work life to pursue citizen involvements.

These six findings on disillusionment, then, as do the following findings on fragmentation, offer new ground from which to form a social critique and sketch out ways forward.

Fragmentation And Mechanism

Chapter Two discussed how the mechanist cosmology of science interrupted the sacred cosmology of medieval Christianity in Western Europe. Reason, not religion, came to dominate social structures. Individualism and the clockwork universe eventually led to questioning the existence of a Divine reality. With the sacred dismantled, the human mind could be used to reconstruct the natural world, societies, and individuals themselves. Underneath these modern projects of reconstruction, Krishnamurti (1981) has identified a process of fragmented thinking. As humans, we see ourselves separate and above the natural world as the central actors in the universe. There has been profound violence not only against the natural world, but also humans against humans as they have divided themselves according to categories such as race, religion, class, and gender. One of the most important divisions is access to the economic market and hence the acceleration of profound levels of poverty and hunger globally. These are just some of the manifestations of fragmented thinking that issue from a mechanist worldview. How are the participants' descriptions of fragmentation related to a mechanist cosmology that shapes their lived time, lived space, lived body, and lived relations?

Mechanistic Structures in the Workplace

The increasing pace of working and living has permeated our daily work lives as business ideologues; for example, N. Beck (1995) exhorted workers to learn more and work harder to survive: "Hit the ground running or you won't keep up!" What drives this ideology of constant and fast-paced change?

Time has become *the* critical commodity in the Information Age, observed Jeremy Rifkin (1995). Living according to seasonal and biological rhythms gave way to clock time during the Industrial Revolution. Today it is dictated by electronic time in which "nanoseconds" of time increase the frenetic rhythm of our lives. A nanosecond is a unit of duration that is so small it cannot be experienced by the human senses (186). Most financial and communication transactions take place in nanosecond time, with the ensuing expectations that humans can work faster and more efficiently alongside their electronic tools. As the work demands increase, the electronic tools increase, the time allotted for task completion decreases, and a frenetic pace results.

The stress that all the participants experienced can be linked with this forced adaptation to the nanosecond culture spawned by the computer. Nanosecond work cultures are increasingly at odds with the organic, biological time that is genetically embedded in our bodies. Anne offered an excellent description of the increasing pace of working and living that she had experienced over the past 20 years due to electronic technology. According to Rifkin (1995), computers " have both increased the volume and accelerated the flow of activity in every aspect of society. The compression of time requires quicker responses and faster decision making to remain competitive" (101).

Although this quick response system of machines has been hailed as the route to unleash human creativity and autonomy, in reality it has produced the reverse. As Kate and Jennifer described, there is increased control over lower echelons in organizations and hence greater worker compliance rather than empowerment. They described the minimization of their creativity as the workload increased and the minimization of autonomy through increased pressure to comply with decisions from above. The unspoken expectation is that humans need to match the speed with which their tools can work and the site at which the tools are located. This efficiency ideology often begets stricter management control, not enhanced worker autonomy, and shapes the "clock-punching" nature of modern work.

Loss of creativity and autonomy is not the only impact, however. The many middle managers who used to work alongside Anne before they were laid off were vital functionaries in the large health bureaucracy. Middle managers were necessary because they facilitated the flow of information in the hierarchy between the top and bottom. In the era of mass production and distribution, this kind of "absolute control was necessary" (Reich, as cited in Rifkin, 1995: 94) to ensure that all parts of the organization were working coherently. With the advent of computer and communication technologies, these middle managers were no longer necessary. Computers have increased the access to and availability of information, thus taking over many of these coordination functions. This is one of the key reasons for such massive layoffs in the 1980s and early 1990s as middle managers and other staff were replaced by electronic machines. In 1992, *Fortune* magazine reported that corporations were eliminating 2,000,000 jobs annually. In 1995, AT&T alone laid off 77,000 workers at all levels of the company. In Canada, CN laid off 3,000 workers and in 1998 established a fully computerized, centralized control system to run trains across the whole country using only 67 employees.

Mechanistic Structures in Household Life

Mechanistic time has also permeated the home, creating a sense of whirlwind in the home. Kate, Anne, and Sally all struggled to ensure that household tasks were completed so that they could leave for the next day of work. If all the schedules and needs of the family run like a well-oiled machine, the "productivity" of the family at school and work is ensured. Yet all these household tasks are so overwhelming in a short period of time that these women experience too much grasping for their time, energy, and focus.

It is nearly impossible to work according to organic time in one's household and shift into clock/electronic time in the workplace. For those most closely associated with young children, the sick, and elderly, this chasm is glaringly evident. Kate described well the infinite patience required to adjust to children who are not aware of agendas, deadlines, and clock time. Rushing to ensure that all the necessary tasks are done to accommodate store hours, school hours, and work hours constantly violates the organic nature of relationships. Therefore, most pieces of time are expended in the context of a certain role—as mother, wife, daughter, housecleaner, cook, and so on. When time is short, the connection to self and partner is the greatest sacrifice to keep the household machine running. This is particularly damaging if this connected time is required for replenishment and for a centering of who one is that 'plays the roles.' The second greatest sacrifice is the marriage relationship, in which the necessary instrumental tasks take precedence over this most intimate human connection. The result is another form of fragmentation where there is too much to be done in the home, and the ongoing incompletion and dispersion continue to wear away at energy and focus.

The efficiency ideology of the machine has permeated home life—through the shrinking hours available to fulfill home responsibilities, the separation of work site from home site, and the accommodation to electronic devices in the home and clock time in relationships. The struggle was to "hurry up" and get everything done so that they could relax and enjoy their loved ones.

Juliet Shor (1992), in her well-researched book *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure*, offered a vital analysis of overwork in the contemporary household in comparison to previous eras. The 52 hours spent in household work a week has not changed from the 1910s to the 1990s, despite all of the labour-saving appliances designed for household use and the change in structural services such as indoor plumbing, power, and heating. She offered four explanations that touch on the material and cultural ways that household life has been constructed.

First, both Shor (1992) and Waring (1988), as trained economists, show how in formal economic accounting women's productive and reproductive labour in their households has never been considered economic activity, though around the world and across the ages domestic work has been back breaking and exhausting. That domestic activity has been excluded from the realm of "labour" has resulted in the economic invisibility of women including a devaluing of these services and a hidden informal cash economy, as well as isolation for the women who were full-time housewives. How did the notion of 'housewife" arise, and what keeps it operational?

From the turn of the century, women have been systematically excluded from the market by outright prohibitions in which, for instance, married women could not be teachers or clerical workers. The largely male trade-union movement barred women's employment in manufacturing or negotiated lower pay. For years, the unions argued for a "family wage" so that men could "support" a wife at home devoted to housecleaning, cooking, and mothering. Women were only directly paid through their husbands' wages. To support a wife at home was to have reached the privileged status of a middle-class lifestyle. Given these cultural messages, the women in the working classes who needed to bring in income were part of the cash economy through informal means, such as taking in boarders, as Sally did; taking in laundry or sewing; selling garden produce or preserves; and so forth. The ideal was that women should not have to be subjected to the harsh capitalist world, and therefore the notion of housewives as leisured has been a symbol of the good North American family. Shor (1992) cited Rodgers: "Middle-class women faced a paradoxical set of expectations. They were to work but . . . not seem to work. . . . They were to run a household, yet return themselves in the census as unemployed" (96).

The post WWII image was of women who changed out of their house dresses into make-up and something nicer to be desirable for the five o'clock homecoming father and the leisurely shared family meal. Therefore, all work that falls out of the purview of the formal capitalist economy is "leisure." This devastating polarity has hidden the labour of women.

Simultaneously, the expectations for women working at home substantially increased as new scientific knowledge diffused through the new disciplines of domestic science, such as home economics, social work, child psychology, nutrition, interior design, food esthetics, and scientific nursing to promote hygiene and the treatment of common illnesses. Past studies have demonstrated that housecleaning was often a yearly or biannual event and that personal cleaning was also done irregularly. Small children were never "raised" but simply grew up beside the work and communal activities of adults, often as economically contributing members. What is now considered filth, body odor, child neglect, and abuse were common in other eras. In the 19th century, however, standards changed; and in the 20th century the services of the homemaker, wife, and mother were dramatically expanded.

The standards for house and personal cleanliness have soared in response to the germ theory, generating the "eat-off-the-floor" and "freshly pressed" standard. A host of consumer items from vacuum cleaners for newly developed rugs and specialized cleaning fluids have all increased the time spent on household cleaning. In fact, it has been suggested that all the technological gadgets and appliances now found in homes increase the time spent in household work. Only the microwave oven has proven to reduce housework. Washing machines have substantially increased household work as monthly clothes washing has given way to washing after one use. Schools in which teachers checked for clean fingernails and shirt collars have enhanced this "culture of cleanliness." Home washing machines drove many laundry services out of business just as refrigerators and freezers drove block vendors out of business to be replaced by supermarkets. Similarly, easy one-pot cooking such as soups and stews and one-pot roasting have given way to esthetically pleasing, gourmet, nutritionally correct, and illness-preventing meals. So although people no longer have to spin yarn, hand-wash clothing, haul water, make candles, grow all their own produce, or make butter, they now have higher standards for cleanliness, nutrition, home esthetics, and entertaining and therefore spend more time shopping to procure the services and commodities necessary for these standards.

Prosperity helped to drive rising standards through the ability to purchase the newly developed consumer items for this healthier, cleaner, and fancier "standard of living." As many of these services came to be done "in-house," they disappeared from any national economic accounting. Housework was important for corporate capitalism by dramatically expanding the market for consumer goods. And as Shor (1992) suggested, this is all tied to a romantic image of the selfless mother and wife, a cultural icon of unstinting altruism (94).

Within this reality of the invasion of machine efficiency and the invisibility of female labour, the participants used machine language to discuss how better to "use" themselves and find ways to manage time more efficiently. Furthermore, the participants described how they felt "worn out," were experiencing "burnout," or were "overloaded." This is machine language that portrays bodies and emotions as tools to be used more efficiently. Sally shared the story of her daily triple workload, and Kate talked about carrying fragmentation in her body from work to home; it is clear that women pay the highest price for mechanistic living and working conditions.

When the participants talked about balance, it was largely viewed from a mechanist perspective—as trying to get all the parts of the machine (or your life) timed correctly. Each aspect of life required specific allotments of time so that it all could be "fit in." People correspondingly become impatient with the slower forms of human interaction although they valiantly try to find "quality time" individually with those they love, including the young and elderly, who do not operate by clock or electronic time. Anne described how household tasks and even financial transactions could previously be done at a leisurely pace. Now, these too are impacted by electronic time so that the stress of doing more and responding faster infiltrates every aspect of people's lives. Similarly, in the workplace, Anne's staff did not want to have a leisurely conversation with patients to discover their needs, but wanted to run quickly through a paper needs assessment to declare the most efficient solution. Those like Anne who wish to respect organic time and slower moving human relations are increasingly at odds with the rest of society. In many ways, computer time and the incessant flow of information have become taskmasters in both lifeworlds, creating a whirlwind of extreme anxiety, stress, and fatigue.

The Employment Rent Strategy

Why do those who are so overworked and stressed stay in their existing jobs? There are the obvious fears of not being able to find another job, the perennial optimism that things will get better, and the loyalty to colleagues. However, a little-known reason is associated with a concept called *employment rent*. This is a strategy that Ford originally devised early in the 20th century to increase production and improve workforce discipline.

Henry Ford decided to pay his factory workers five dollars a day compared to the two dollars a day paid at other auto plants as an incentive so that workers would discipline themselves to work with the newly implemented conveyor-belt technology. Rather than use a stick to discipline workers, he used a carrot approach by providing an economic incentive that would eventually transform work relations in this century. Through time, unions have made this a key part of their bargaining platform, leading to the well-paid jobs in the manufacturing sector through Europe and North America.

What are the implications of employment rent? First, the extra three dollars paid is considered employment rent, or the increased value of the job to the worker. This increased value would then increase workers' desire to keep their jobs. Simultaneously, as the pay increased, so did the consumption, now allowing many workers to purchase a house and all the other new consumer goods being developed, including the cars that they were producing. After World War II, the war production effort was transformed into consumer production, which required a fast flow-through to keep it operating. There was a concerted effort by governments and corporations to increase consumer spending, leading to the powerful consumer ideology with which we are surrounded today. As Victor Lebow said in a 1950 issue of *New York Journal of Retailing*:

> *Our enormously productive economy . . . demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we see spiritual satisfaction, our ego satisfaction, in consumption . . . We need things, consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced and discarded at an ever increasing rate.*

Thus, the combined impact of higher wages, house mortgages, car loans, and credit card debt has led to an "absolutely docile" workforce willing to be reliable and put in more effort (Ford; as cited in Shor, 1992: 62).

This employment rent strategy has been applied to professional and managerial workers as well who normally are not paid by the hour or piece, but by "getting the job done" (Shor, 1992: 60). When paid more or given more status than professionals in other organizations, many will work the longer hours, take on the bigger and more intense workloads, work free overtime, and be loath to leave despite the stress. This is the situation that Kate experienced despite the fact that she was doing work for which she was neither trained nor interested in. Yet, as all the fatigue researchers have indicated, there is a point at which the stress and demands become too great, and people's productivity and efficiency become impaired (Shor, 1992: 65).

This was the situation for Kate, Anne, and Natalie, where stress led to a profound sense of being torn apart by all the demands and time pressures. Most of the participants found freedom in the realization that if they reduced their consumption, they could simplify their lives in terms of work hours as well as all the hours spent cleaning and running around maintaining "the stuff." One key aspect of the course was seeing the interaction between the consumer ideology and the business efficiency ideology.

The Scarcity Ideology

Most of the participants noted a substantive change in their workplaces in the five years from 1993 to 1998. Reiterating the testimony of other adult students from prior years, early retirements, buying out expensive staff, elimination of positions, or firing those with least seniority were common stories. The research participants were largely those who had survived "drastic" cutbacks of employees and dropping salaries. They needed to adjust to increased workloads and job tenuousness. Most important, the employment rent strategy was losing its grip as the new business ideology shifted to meaner and leaner organizations. Anne referred to this break as the "Old World and the New World." Although she meant this specifically in regard to health care, this can be enlarged to the workforce in general.

Not only had their work organizations become leaner, but they had also become meaner, so that employees expressing dissension were fired and 'unproductive' employees were squeezed out. As many adult students expressed, if they were not seen to be constantly improving or if they exhibited resistance to change, they were "dead weights tossed out the door." Human Resources Canada (1994) confirmed this new attitude: "The feeling of insecurity is pervasive" and suggested that it explained the all-time low in workplace morale.

Many of my adult students had been employed in the public sector. In 1993, substantial job, budget, and program cuts were implemented in the public sector, particularly health, education, and social services. As an Alberta Treasurer quipped in 1994, "Normal doesn't live in Alberta anymore" (Helmer in Harrison & Laxer, 1995: 70). This move, copycatted in Ontario, is part of the larger neoliberal movement toward smaller government and less accessible public services. This blitzkrieg on government services put thousands of people out in the street and thousands more working the duties of several jobs with shrinking resources. Anne agreed that efficiency in health and social services is important, but now in her whirling fragmentation, she said that there simply were not enough managers left to do the work:

> *Is it something within me, or is it all workplace—the fact that there's too much work and not enough [resources]—it's easy to say, "Oh, we need more money; we need more staff," but that's sort of like the easy way out. . . . That might be partly true, but I think you also have to look at, how are you doing things? Is there something that could be done differently so that you're using the resources well, but also yourself well?*

Rather than seriously questioning the staffing cutbacks, many people like Anne agreed with the efficiency ideology, and they looked to how they could better "use" themselves and existing resources to get the job done. The disappearance of so many jobs has produced an insecurity that muffles discontent. The hypnosis of overwork also serves to significantly limit reflection that would question and challenge the new business ideology.

The labour market has returned to the ideology of scarcity and thereby is emphasizing the dependence of workers on finding and keeping a "job." Scarcity of jobs significantly increases competition and acquiescence to deteriorating working conditions and pay. Most people felt highly pushed to be "more productive" and "more efficient," even though they were juggling double and triple the work tasks with shrinking monetary resources and personnel. Fragmentation, then, is overriding one's physical and emotional needs given the threat of losing a job in insecure times.

Scarcity is a fundamental notion that drives an economistic society defined by economic growth and productivity. When individuals see their time as needing to be "productive," they are caught in the scarcity trap. When they believe that they do not have enough "stuff," they are caught in the scarcity trap. Believing in scarcity fuels the role of the market to ameliorate the scarcity it creates.

Scarcity also fuels the feelings of insecurity that render citizens impotent and conformist. Participants fear the insecurity of their jobs in an increasingly tenuous employment world, and therefore they fear for the material security of their lifestyles and the psychological stability of their home lives. Each person regards him/herself as the only security and thus is transformed into a contemporary rugged individualist who must survive in a highly competitive environment. Here we come full circle to competition again, for competition and insecurity breed grasping what one can.

Grasping, a negative aspect of desire, is the experience of never being content but always wanting one more thing, experience, or relationship in order to be fulfilled. What is here now is never enough, and therefore one continually experiences scarcity. Scarcity then drives fragmentation—inner fragmentation and social fragmentation—in the search for the power and control to satiate the grasping for security.

Underneath the grasping lies the tension that we are not whole, we are not complete. This blinds individuals and society by limiting what is seen by what can be grasped to quickly fill our lives. Rather, the peace that Dan talked about is not the peace of fulfilling all these wants, but in ending the perennial dissatisfaction (Kornfield, 1993: 87). Therefore, individual grasping is reflected by a grasping society shaping this desire.

The Efficiency Ideology

Ironically, the housewife who can do 12 tasks at once is being used as the model for the new flexiworker who corporations say is needed for the global economy. Part of the new ideology is the belief in constant change, but more important, it is the belief in efficiency—doing more with less.

In theory, ponderous corporate bureaucracies are being restructured so that they are flatter, more creative, and more responsive to constant change. They are also purported to be more efficient with less fat (personnel) weighing down operations. The people who best work in these new organizations are "flexiworkers" and "multitask teams," not specialized departments. Flexiworkers are those who carry generic skills and therefore are unconcerned by long-term uncertainty in the job-market. Flexiworkers are expected to live "multiple-option flexilives" in which they constantly change careers and are permanently mobile.

This is a dramatic about-face in business ideology which has stressed specialization and constancy in one job with one company in the past. Mechthild Hart (1992) explained it this way:

> *It is no longer sufficient to educate a work force which can adapt and live with the regimentations of factory life. This would directly contradict the need for flexibility and versatility. What is called for is a psychological, mental and behavioural preparation for living with instability, and for being able to think of oneself in terms of a renewable, exchangeable and updatable resource rather than in terms of a human being with unique experiences, hopes, wishes, and dreams. (87)*

Hart (1992) went on to say that this continual obsolescence of one's work competencies conflicts with the psychological and social need for constancy in one's work life and the continuity needed to develop and sustain a sense of self and a supportive community. Fragmentation and efficiency are essential components of the new business ideology in which job insecurity, adaptable, free-floating workers, and loss of social continuity characterize the most efficient way to do business. Those workers, unable to adapt to the conditions of fragmentation and insecurity, are simply expunged from the system. Kate in particular experienced this ideology when she was expected to perform work for which she was neither trained nor interested in, but that efficiency of operation demanded.

What is most interesting in the lives of Anne, Kate, Natalie, and Jennifer is that they had adopted the flexiworker ideology and the efficiency ideology, yet the purported flattening of bureaucratic organizations had not occurred. Anne, Kate, and Jennifer all experienced significant withdrawal of autonomy, increased scrutiny, loss of creativity, and an anticollaborative ethos. They were caught in the borderlands between the New and the Old Worlds. They have been adaptable to the increased workloads, greater diversity of tasks, and "working smarter." Their experience, however, is an increasingly rigid organizational structure that eliminates the conditions for the very skills so highly valued in contemporary business ideology.

The result is that individual "resources" of energy, focus, commitment, and time were being consumed without being replenished in sustainable working conditions.

Under these circumstances, they said that their productivity was declining, not increasing. Most important, their health and well-being were being violated daily. This is not of great concern to the business ideologues of the day. As Lance Morrow (as cited in Bridges, 1994) asserted, "This is the future. Its message is this: You are on your own" (1).

A Mechanistic Cosmology in Relationships

The mechanist cosmology promotes the view of individuals as autonomous agents who can control their external and internal environments toward individual fulfillment. A mechanist cosmology also promotes the view that we "have" relationships in which we play roles as a way to meet compartmentalized obligations and expectations. Rather than working as a way to contribute to the well-being of a larger community and rather than living embedded in a multifaceted identity in a continuous community fabric, individuals have been stripped of their place in terms of a physical place, as well as a place in a human community. Therefore, this disembedded individual has become the center of activity, leading to a fragmented identity that changes according to the space and relationships in which one finds oneself.

This relational having mode of existence relates directly to the having mode in the world of material goods. This having mode is a direct result of a mechanist cosmology that suggests that the human role is an activist role—to get the most out of life experiences—by amassing activity and relationships along with amassing "stuff." This activist role is the role of mastery, in which individuals control their own fate; it is not in the hands of some external power or Divine power. The only security that individuals have, then, is to amass activity, relationships, and material goods, for there is little security to be found in any of the communities in which individuals move in and out or in the Providence of Divine Power. So although relationships are necessary in a society of atomistic individuals, it is the fragmented nature of the relationships where people change their manner of being depending on the site and purpose of the relationship. Networking is the finest example of mechanistic relationships—relationships cultivated for future personal gain, not for the celebration of "being."

Therefore, the restless activities to "do and be as much as we can" are not necessarily the road to authenticity or wholeness. For Taylor (1991), the manner and content of authenticity must be separated. Being responsible for oneself *does* mean the process of defining ourselves and our orientations within ourselves, but it also means that the content of our orientations must have some external reference point in the culture in which we reside. The fragmentation that was felt by the participants most often concerned the limited control they felt over their internal as well as external reference points. As Dan put it, "I don't know how much I have control over." Not only is fragmentation a question of time and energy, but it also includes questions of reference points for authenticity and notions of wholeness.

Findings From an Analysis of Mechanism and Fragmentation

In Chapter Seven, questions were posed about what has created the issue of balance in participant's lives. At first glance, it appeared to be an issue of quantity of time as well as too many roles and relational expectations. This analysis has revealed findings that go beyond this common-sense analysis to point to the mechanist structures that drive the fragmentation of space, time, body, and relationships.

Finding #1: The frenetic rhythms of life are driven by clock and electronic time—mechanistic time—which works against organic, biological time. Hypnotic motion, or whirling dervishes, is the expectation that humans can keep up to the flow of information dictated by nanosecond time. Nanosecond work cultures have resulted in a minimization of creativity and autonomy as well as the loss of jobs. When balance is viewed mechanistically, it means trying to fit in appropriate units of time for all the aspects of one's life.

Finding #2: Mechanistic time works against the organic time in which children, the sick, or the elderly exist. The efficiency ideology results when trying to squeeze all the household and relational tasks into a small time frame. With the fragmentation between work and home sites, the whirling at work is carried home in the body. By accommodating electronic devices, longer work hours and separation of work and home, mechanism now permeates home life. The cultural construction of household life produces fragmentation through standards of cleanliness, organization, and nutrition that have escalated and in which the parenting and partnering process have become the most intensive in human history. Home technologies have inflated levels of consumption and the maintenance required. These pressures at home and work mean that many are existing on the razor's edge of physical collapse. Balance was largely thought of as getting the machine of one's household and one's life running as a smoothly oiled machine. Clock time directly conflicts with organic time, slower moving human relations, and biological needs. It is women who pay the highest price for this dissonance.

Finding #3: The development of employment rent as a strategy to pay higher was to encourage workers to work harder while adapting to changes in production. Together with the momentum of the consumer ideology, families now had more disposable cash and consumer items to buy, and the workforce became docile, reliable, and harder working. Economic growth was ensured by the faster flow-through of household goods, fragmenting the relationship individuals have with material goods.

Finding #4: The business strategy of paying a higher salary so that workers "put up with" the deteriorating conditions and increasing hours of the job was no longer sufficient. Employment rent is now being submerged by the drastic reductions in permanent jobs and dropping salaries. Scarcity of jobs and intense competition for remaining jobs breed insecurity, pushing mentally and physically for more efficient production, and the silencing of discontent. Fragmentation occurs when individuals override their physical and emotional needs to stay on top of job scarcity and competition. Scarcity also underlines the dependence of workers on "jobs" and the need for grasping to develop some base of security. The security is sought out in material goods, status, and a job, but leads to fragmented living.

Finding #5: The efficiency ideology of doing more with less and working smarter has gained momentum to veil the shift to insecure work, increased workloads, and decreasing autonomy and creativity. People are encouraged to think of themselves as being updatable, renewable, efficient resources available for persistent temporary employ. Many large bureaucracies have not flattened their organizations at the same rate as workers have adapted to the flexiworker ideology, leading to the withdrawal of autonomy and increased scrutiny. In this situation, the energy and commitment of workers are being consumed without being replenished by the sense of useful work, leading to a loss of health and well-being.

Finding #6: A mechanistic cosmology promotes autonomous individuals seeking to be in control of their internal and external environments for personal fulfillment. These disembedded individuals are required to acquire activity, relationships, and material goods as a way to develop a sense of identity, community, and security. When people are disembedded from a continuous community fabric, they have a fragmented identity by changing who they are according to the space and relationship in which they find themselves. This "having mode" of existence is appropriate for a fragmented society that has little sense of being connected to anything beyond immediate concerns. Therefore, individuals choose busyness and material goods as the road to authenticity and wholeness. There is a lack of any external reference points that could overcome the fragmentation. This is most profoundly a state of alienation.

Alienation in Working and Living

With all of these faces of fragmentation and their relationship to bureaucratic industrialized production, the result is alienation in both working and living. Most profoundly, the participants were experiencing the severance of their organic relationship to space, to time, to their bodies, and to their relationships. What have been severed are the ontological purposes for working and the bodily senses in living. All of the participants in their own way described how they worked in artificial spaces, how their bodies were not withstanding the stresses, how time was artificially fragmented, and how their relationships had lost the organic social nature that make them so important for existence. Dewey (as cited in Hart, 1992) called this a severance of the senses, in which the sensuous involvement with the world has been severed from the world of "the head" (156). This severance has been encouraged by the rationalization of work in bureaucratic organizations and technological revolutions that have constructed mechanistic structures, at home as much as at work. In fact, this whole polarity between home and work as two lifeworlds is part of this severance.

Early in the history of industrialism, Marx described alienation as implicit in capitalist production. Alienation means to lose contact with or to be estranged, detached, or distanced from a part of one's life. In other words, it is the condition of alienation that creates all the faces of fragmentation, where a number of essential ties have been severed from the social whole. Marx understood alienation to be comprised of several elements:

- Humans are alienated in their work or life activity because they have no part in deciding what to do or how to do it and are required to work in detrimental, uncreative conditions;
- Humans are alienated from their products or what they create as they have no control over what they make or what becomes of it;
- Humans are alienated from other humans because of competition and hostility among all groupings in society eliminating a feeling of genuine human community; and
- Humans are alienated from the natural world by the inorganic conditions of human existence (Ollman, 1971).

Although business ideology has attempted to ameliorate these aspects of alienation in this century as described above, the root causes of alienation remain untouched. In sum, humans have been distanced from their social mode of existence and from the sources of life itself. Life for Marx included physical and intellectual life, human morality, human activity, human enjoyment, and human essence (Ollman, 1971: 301). When these essential human capacities are blocked and the potentialities for wholeness are thwarted, then one is alienated.

Within the condition of alienation, the fundamental moral principles such as freedom or self-determination, human community, and self-realization cannot be realized. Going beyond the discussions of work to which Marx, Hannah Arendt, and other theorists contributed, Mechthild Hart (1992) integrated aspects of feminist theory with a material analysis to deepen the understanding of alienation. Contrary to those above, she did not reject the necessities of our physical existence as limiting and opposed to freedom. She did not accept that liberation from bodily necessity equals freedom, for as she chastised, “It is this horror of organic and natural life processes which enters into the degradation of women’s work,” which degrades the natural world, and which drives the whole modern enterprise to liberate human existence from the production of “basic necessities” (175, 105). In fact, the “overall purpose of production is precisely not oriented towards the satisfaction of human needs, but towards the accumulation of capital” (106).

Nowhere is this clearer that when we place record corporate profits side by side with dramatic increases in global unemployment and place the production of trivial consumer items side by side with escalating poverty and hunger. What is so striking is that the participants expressed their greatest satisfaction when they were engaged with the basic necessities of life—enjoyment of cooking, assisting children, gardening, and sewing—when there was time! These tasks and responsibilities form the fundamental fabric of life which has been fragmented further and further. Producing basic necessities and taking care of life, such as children, are marginalized. Hart (1992) challenged the view that self-realization can occur only outside of "domestic work" or through liberation from work altogether. She proposed that freedom and necessity are both fragments of a whole that are not opposed but dialectically related. She held up subsistence production, not as the antithesis of capitalist production, but as a model of work that follows a fundamentally different rationality. She explained:

> *Subsistence work is based on a conscious and positive acknowledgement of the ultimate purpose of work and production: to maintain and improve* life*. Only such an acknowledgement keeps the link between work, life and necessity intact. By dissolving the rigid opposition between freedom and necessity, work emerges as an experience which contains the elements of burden as well as enjoyment in an inseparable dialectical unity. (178; emphasis in original)*

In this view, work for use-value, not work for exchange-value, is more highly valued and reduces the gap between production and consumption. In this way, we see that involvement in a monied economy directly involves one in the market that operates on an instrumental rationality and inorganic relations and time. Transcending alienation, or rather finding balance, is linked to rethinking organic/inorganic time, consumptive habits, reliance on income-generating jobs, and spiritual practices. More specifically, it is being able to maintain integrity and ethical agency in the face of organizational constraints, and it is reconnecting to life-giving activities that give a sense of wholeness. This is what the course began to address, and so we turn to Chapter Ten to determine the relationship between this alienated being and transformative education.

V

CHAPTER TEN

LIVING TRANSFORMATION:

THE PARADOX OF RESTORATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

> *It is only when we can believe that we are creating the soul that life has any meaning, but when we can believe it—and I do and always have—then there is nothing we do that is without meaning and nothing that we suffer that does not hold the seed of creation in it. (May Sarton)*

PEDAGOGICAL ENTRY POINTS

Social movements and radical educators who are interested in transformative learning for catalyzing social change commonly assume that if they make a logical and compelling case for change, adults will respond. If they do not, they are assumed to be in denial about social and environmental issues, or they are resistant to change given their stake in the existing system. This research has demonstrated that individuals are not necessarily in denial, narcissistic, or resistant to change. In fact, these participants were deeply concerned about social issues beyond themselves and felt a large responsibility to bring about change for a better future. They were profoundly constrained, however, in several ways.

First, many middle-class people have projected their ethical horizons and identity as moral beings into their profession or position. However, there was an increasing loss of space within work organizations to speak about or act on their ethics. There was no uncertainty about their moral and ethical horizons, but an illusion that they could carry out their civic responsibilities and thereby "make a difference" in society through their worksites. Bureaucratic dynamics, instrumental procedures, and utilitarian ethics blocked the ability of individuals to enact their ethical autonomy as part of organizational democracy.

Second, in their household practices and volunteer work in civil society, the larger systems dwarf the modest actions they may take. They felt little sense that they could make a substantive impact on pressing social issues in the public arena through household changes or volunteerism.

Third, a condition that compounds the lack of ethical efficacy is the deepening of fragmentation. Fragmentation is exacerbated by the business ideology of scarcity, competitiveness, and efficiency and by the adoption of mechanistic structures into home life which override an organic sense of time in relationships and biological needs. The drive to "be and do as much as we can" for a fulfilled life means that people are whirling between relational expectations and living fragmented identities without any sense of a larger reference point outside themselves.

In this social historical moment, these realities offer significant entry points for transformative educational processes. The yearning for balance and its root cause of fragmentation and the yearning to making a difference and its root cause of disillusionment are broadly experienced realities that can be important entry points for transformative learning. These realities compromise individual and family well-being as well as compromise citizen involvement, particularly in social and environmental issues.

When educators, social movements, and social theorists castigate "the public" for narcissism, malaise, and denial, they do not recognize how individuals feel powerless to make a substantive impact and are constrained by the structures in which they work despite their best intentions of being responsible citizens. Calls for material sacrifice, blaming of institutions and corporations, wealth guilt, and fears of global doom serve only to deepen the sense of powerlessness and frustration at not being able to take action that would be effective and substantive. These approaches also perpetuate the fragmentedness that characterizes the Modern Age: When people are deeply embedded in bureaucratic organizational life and mechanistic household life, it alienates them from essential ties that are life-giving, from wholeness.

Where there is a yearning for transformation, individuals are at a personal historical moment when they are willing to embrace an opportunity for transformation. Appropriate educational processes can facilitate individuals' reexamining the personal and cultural scripts that brought them to a crossroad in their life. In particular, transformative learning processes can offer new frameworks for retelling personal stories, a systematic process for widening their options, and travelling companions during a time of transition. More important, it can assist individuals in a dialogical process to identify how they have been estranged from organic relationships to time, space, body, and human relations. Most important, it can offer experiences of being whole, being reconnected to their ethics and re-enlivened by a mode of "being" rather than "having."

“DISCOVERING” RESTORATIVE LEARNING

In considering the question of whether the participants experienced transformation at all, a surprising “discovery” emerged. Although the participants did experience transformation, as will be defined below, they also experienced a restorative process of learning.

In a survey of the changes that the participants experienced through the course, they clearly stated that they did not transform their fundamental principles and values, as transformative learning theory presupposes. Many of the participants echoed Dan in saying that they were able to return to their inner compass, which was submerged under the deluge of adult expectations and cultural scripts: “I’m starting to get it back. . . . [It] didn’t need much clarification; it was my bedrock, my foundation, on which I have based decisions in my life.”

This contrasts to existing transformation and action research theory that generally stipulates that

> *empowerment . . . relates to the potential for change within the individual’s deeper structures of sedimented knowledge. . . . The problem we face is how to disturb these deeper layers of calcified experience in order to enable meaningful deep change to take place and new kinds of structures to develop. . . . For change to occur in a meaningful way, this bedrock of calcified experience and understanding needs to be disturbed. . . . [They need] a gradual and protected examination and destabilization of their internal core. . . . For many it is a traumatic awakening into a scream of consciousness where the familiar daily routines . . . become discordant symbols of the conflicts between the surface (articulated) and deep (unarticulated) levels of knowing. With the right support, change can occur; in a constructive way. (Sanger, 1990: 174-175)*

Although Jack Sanger (1990) was referring to the sedimented ideas that teachers have about their teaching practice, this notion that sedimented experience is knowledge that needs to be transformed undergirds much of transformation theory—whether it is personal, organizational, or social transformational. In the current theory it is hypothesized that if the learning can go deep enough into the core of an individual’s personality and construct and destabilize it, then transformation will occur.

This study discovered that the most significant change experienced by these research participants was their ability to *restore* their foundational ethics to a conscious place in their daily lives. One of the most important contributions the course offered participants was to provide an ethical sanctuary for them to heighten their ethical consciousness and find ways to animate it. The second was to restore an organic relatedness to their time, space, bodies, and relationships.

Providing Ethical Sanctuary

In a world that privileges change for change's sake, there is little consideration for what needs to be preserved and restored, other than what is proposed by right wing conservative thinkers. As an ecological educator, C. A. Bowers (1995) suggested that the belief that change is progressive, even among the most radical thinkers, perpetuates some of the deepest and most destructive cultural assumptions and patterns of modern culture. What is considered most enlightened may actually be that which is most problematic. One of these is the current notion of transformation that perpetuates modern cultural patterns.

One step forward is recognizing the value of restorative learning. The participants made it clear that their ethics of honesty, integrity, fairness, courage, respect, loyalty, community service, and citizen responsibility did not require transformation, but restoration to a rightful place in their lives and in society at large. Contrary to many social analyses, these ethics are not "missing" but have been submerged through the daily requirements of workplaces that function according to opposing ethics. Anne's ethic of service was compromised by the ethic of utilitarianism, in which profit bottom lines, images of success, and expediency dominated. Sally's ethic of social justice and serving the most vulnerable was compromised by professional monopolies that excluded her knowledge and State utilitarianism that rationalized the needs of the majority as their only concern. Kate's ethic of social contract was compromised by patriarchal power politics, the lack of bureaucratic rationalism, exploitative labour practices, and profits for shareholders over the common good. Ky and Garth's ethic of good intentions was violated by a bureaucratic instrumentalist view of humans in which people are used to achieve a goal outside of themselves and people can be bought and replaced as tools. They felt that they needed to "sell their soul" or give over their ethical autonomy to the organization to keep their jobs.

In both the classroom and interview conversations, the participants found a protected space where they could freely articulate how their ethical efficacy was missing or blocked. For Sally, "what I have been missing is the clarity of convictions"' and, like

Dan, the course enabled her to identify what these bedrock convictions were and to bring them to crystal clarity. She then determined, "I would like to be my own boss, able to affect actions or change situations that are compromising or unethical." A year after the course was over, she decided to address the exploitation of teacher assistants. She applied for a job reclassification with several other women "to elevate their position in life." This was received in a hostile manner, and all five women were fired:

> *In the past, this work experience . . . would have crushed me. Now I was able to move beyond and . . . find new opportunities to help make a difference for myself and others. . . . So my Chrysalis self has decided to work toward union involvement . . . since my personal mandate is the equality and emancipation of women everywhere.*

By identifying and clarifying her ethical convictions back into a central place in her life, she could take a bold stand by saying, "The principles of how I work are, you must have integrity, authenticity, and if these are threatened, then don't do the work!" From this position, Sally found the courage to enact her ethical efficacy by challenging exploitation, finding a new job, taking on a role in union member education, and thereby fighting for the emancipation of women. "The principles really are not new. What is new is that I have never thought of them in a clear, purposefully focused way."

For Kate, "[the interview] got me thinking that perhaps my personal values are in conflict with my work which is making me so dissatisfied." She also clarified that "good work for me is something that is consistent with who I am and what I believe; mindful of the natural world and my impact on it." By identifying the issues of ethical conflict in her worksite and then retrieving both her personal principles and her professional ideals, Kate was able to finally leave her job and eventually take on contract work in the environmental movement. Anne also appreciated the ethical reflection: "Truly reflecting on the broad issues of purpose for work and 'does work fit with my values?' will be helpful in planning my next steps." A year later, she left the management position for an educator position that more clearly reflected her ethics and enabled her the freedom to share her ethics in her workplace. Once she clearly identified the competing ethics and the price she was paying, she could make a decision.

Ky shared this sentiment and summarized that "working and living should not be placed in separate boxes demanding very different persona to fulfill expectations. You have to live and work with integrity and honesty—with yourself and others." This statement illustrates the wholeness of being that each of these participants were enacting in their lives. This was the impact of having an ethical sanctuary from which to restore their ethics as a conscious guide in their working and living.

The societal issue, then, is not an ethical malaise or decline but the lack of spaces for discussing competing ethical systems, and animating ethical autonomy. Where this course could have been much more powerful was to have named the conflicting ethical systems, as articulated in the previous chapter. With names for these conflicting ethical systems, the participants could have been much more effective in clarifying the ethical positions, what was at stake in the various situations they experienced, and how to take more strategic action resulting in social change. Individuals challenged the systems and found themselves in or joined social movements dedicated to social change; other participants quietly left and found work more congruent with their values. Therefore, the social change element of the course was not as effective as it could have been.

A second critique of the course was the inability to provide guidance about change in large bureaucratic institutions and other industrialized forms of work, as Dan originally criticized. The participants felt the competing ethics around them, but they felt limited to a response at the most personal level rather than at a citizen level. Dan expressed this as "feeling at odds with the rest of society":

> *This is what's important to me; this is how I will be, not because I'm going to go to heaven at the end, just because this is the right way to live. . . . No, the society at large doesn't have those qualities in a great degree. . . . Loyalty—I don't see loyalty as a big thing. Honesty, no. With politics, even in politics. . . . What I see all the time is people who are Catholics or Christians or whatever back-stabbing each other and bad-mouthing each other. . . . This makes no sense to me.*

There was a sense that a basic complement of values was not shared in society as a whole, particularly by institutions—churches and government—institutions that traditionally have been the carriers of ethics and concerns for the common good. As such, it points to a more general disillusionment with public institutional life. Dan also suggested that the only power he had was to choose to be around people who shared his values. There did not appear to be any logical route to enact his values at a societal level.

Sally also named the key issues in society as ethics—including morality and honesty. She saw the politicians as self-serving and interested in scapegoating rather than being public examples of the highest principles. Jennifer saw the lack of ethics to be in corporate life and the lack of government initiative to control issues with public impact:

> *I personally don't believe that industry should be able to do whatever they want that is going to impact the health and environment of that around it. . . . Plus even our control or what we perceive as government controls to control some of this stuff are of concern. . . . I guess it's starting to get to me, to the point where it's like, "What can I do?" I can't even figure out what my role should be, is some of that. What do I do as one person?*

This lack of ability to play an important role in social issues at a public level is not only an individual concern or an organizational concern, but also a societal concern. Despite their sense of responsibility, these participants indicated that they saw no appropriate avenue for effective citizen action. They criticized various social movements for being confrontational, single issue and directive, and therefore "written off" by the majority of citizens. Sally preferred social action that is "educational and cooperative" in nature. In sum, they were reluctant to be involved in existing avenues for citizen action because these options do not appear conducive to "making a difference" in shared public life. This course fell short of re-envisioning new routes for citizen action.

In summary, the course provided an ethical sanctuary for personal reflections on the conflicting ethics between participants and their workplaces and public life. Through this clarification process, these individuals were able to restore their ethical systems to a conscious place and find ways to animate the ethics that they held dear. By heightening their consciousness of the ethics operational in the larger society and their own personal ethics, they were able to choose actions that manifested a higher degree of coherence. In providing a learning space that opened up the question of "What is the good?" participants could clarify and mobilize their ethical autonomy. For some of them, that meant finding a new job, reducing their hours, starting their own business, or pursuing further education to open up their employment options. For others it meant letting go of the materialistic lifestyle that alienated them from living with more integrity. Providing ethical sanctuary in a classroom environment means providing both the space for these questions and reflections and the possibility of acting to manifest coherence.

Restoring Radical Relatedness

Another aspect of restorative learning is restoring a radical relatedness—to self, both body and spirit; to significant others; to the natural world; and to the larger human community. The first form of radical relatedness is organic relatedness to body and the natural world. For Kate these two were integral to ensure "that my life choices are not detrimental to my community or my ecosphere. In order to do this I must continue to learn and develop personally and maintain my physical and mental health." To do this, Kate relearned what she knew as a child, that "when I am close to nature . . . I get a sense of peace and contentment that I don't find in my hectic life." When she did, either on walks or out at a borrowed cabin, she reported feeling more centered and more rested. She also celebrated the natural abundance in her life—the taste of water, the texture of an apple, the smell of homemade turkey noodle soup— and therefore felt more connected to the sources of her food as well as grateful. Such connectedness to the natural world has the impact of taking more care of one's body by recognizing its needs and rhythms. For Sally a healthy body and mind came from a healthy spirit.

The second form of radical relatedness, then, is spiritual relatedness within self. Restorative learning for Sally was taking time to "heal my spirit." As Sally described it:

> *This whole class/course experience has been so good for me because it has helped me to finally and truly identify some of the very mixed up feelings . . . [and has] caus[ed] me to examine my spirit to look deep within, peel away the crud, to find beating within me a heart of kindness.*

For Sally and Gena this also included an archetypal restoration in which images from the personal and collective unconsciousness were given room to speak. As Sally explained, "[Symbols and images] help me to understand things and describe things in my world as they happen for me . . . [when I can't] find the words." These extrarational sources of knowledge assisted them in discerning a personal vision as well as their connectedness to a larger spiritual purpose.

The quest for a spiritual life was a quest with which Dan entered the course. He wanted to find a way of "feeding and nourishing my soul as well as my body." He realized that one of the keys for him was late-night silence, star gazing, and reflective candlelight moments. These are ancient ways of spiritual connectedness that are often lost in a hurried, mobile, and electrified society. "Life is a grand adventure, full of mystery. . . . I lost that sense of wonder for a long time, but I'm starting to get it back."

It is this wonder and awe that the course could have developed further. In the second offering of the course, I deliberately told and retold the universe story as elaborated by Swimme and Berry (1992). By referring to the Mystery and Unity that flows through all things (as discovered by the new physicists and known by mystics for centuries) and then tracing the primeval fireball, the ancient sun, the development of conditions for life on Earth, and the earliest living forms until human habitation, the participants much more clearly saw themselves integrally involved in the "Great Work," as Thomas Berry called it. This ongoing creativeness of the universe in which humans have a unique place helped the participants to place their contribution within a much broader context. When we see our life journey as creating soul that is part of the Great Work of Creation, then all things have meaning.

Charles Taylor (1991) asserted that wholeness means finding this larger horizon that gives significance to all personal relationships and activities. An internal horizon unconnected to the external cannot bring a larger meaning to one's activities and can lead to "the worst forms of subjectivism" (82). Although the old social order with its background of fixed meanings and symbols was passing away for individuals, they needed to position the importance of their life within the larger meaning and order of the cosmos, to imbue their life experiences with meaning. To have this larger reference point alongside an internal reference point of authenticity is to give the self ultimate importance beyond the self; this ultimately is wholeness. Gena articulated this movement back and forth from the personal to the cosmic through the natural world:

> *[The images of the loon and learning biomimcry] appeal to the thinker in me and my belief in the connectedness of all things, but [I] haven't thought about looking at this on a smaller, perhaps more practical scale through nature. . . . Yet it invites me everyday!*

Gena shared the story of how the plasticine house she built in the first class fell on the floor just as her security structures were breaking down. She said that she had burst through the clouds to see a whole new world, from a cosmic vantage point. Part of this new world is the third form of radical relatedness—in their human relations, with significant others as well as with the larger human community. Gena said, "I see growth in my connection to nature, . . . growth in the desire to be of service, . . . growth in feelings of connectedness/community, . . . growth in global thinking—how the pieces connect to the whole."

Radical relatedness is exactly that—a sense of being connected at the root of all things—the natural community, the community of the spirit, and the human community near and far. Many of the participants talked about looking past their own immediate needs and making a contribution to the larger human community. Angie said:

> *I had not given a lot of thought to this prior to the course, but I can honestly say that I will look at the communities that I impact and that I could be a part of to improve the world situation.*

Hope concurred:

> *We really don't stop and think of the implications of our actions until a course like this brings them to the forefront. I hope that future plans will bring more public attention to not only what is happening but how everyone can help to make changes.*

But as Hope cautioned, this is easier to say than to do:

> *I found that even though we developed principles and investigated what is meaningful for us, the struggle will be in implementing changes in my workplace. Some things have to be done, and I don't think we get away from those. I know in my personal life that I'm looking forward to getting more involved in the community and with environmental work.*

However, one of the most important steps to enabling them to become more active in their communities was finding the time to do this. Working less was one avenue that some participants chose, but another was simplifying their material lifestyle. This was done not only for community involvement, but also to shift priority to their significant relationships away from work. This shift was shaped by the concept of social wealth. Kate expand:

> *If you really think about it, do we really need this? Or why am I buying this? That kind of question, what it's replacing. . . . I have stopped a lot of those kinds of things. . . . This week my approach was more on only spending money if it contributed to my vision of social wealth.*

Another aspect of radical human relatedness is choosing social wealth actions. Kate decided to support her husband and his family by attending a funeral that she otherwise would not have attended. She also created a vision around these new priorities, "a vision where family and personal relationships are central instead of finances and economics." Dan clarified his priorities: "My friends and family are the most important parts of my life. It's time I gave them the honour and attention they deserve." Indeed, both Kate and Dan recognized that some of the times they felt most "balanced" were when they were involved in activities with their kids and the sense of clock time was lost.

One of the key issues revealed by this study is that there may not be an ethical malaise or decline as many theorists have proposed. Rather, the issue may be the lack of protected spaces for articulating and animating ethical autonomy. Although having a strong sense of citizen responsibility, individuals felt blocked from enacting their ethics by bureaucratic and utilitarian work organizations or by the lack of effective avenues for taking citizen responsibility. This course provided the space for restorative learning by providing an ethical sanctuary where participants could re-identify and clarify their ethics as well as explore routes for enacting their ethics. They identified the differences between their personal and professional ethics, worksite ethics, and broader cultural ethics. This heightened their consciousness to choose actions manifesting coherence. In some cases this required them to reduce their work hours, quit disillusioning or fragmenting jobs, and find new work that cohered with their personal ethics.

Participants also began to restore their organic connections with time, space, body, and human relations. They relearned how to flow with organic time. They cultivated mindfulness, gratitude, and other contemplative practices. They reconnected with and began to understand wild spaces. They decluttered their physical and mental spaces and reduced consumption. They researched bioregional sources of water and food and began to enjoy noncommodified simple pleasures. However, restorative learning is dialectically related to transformative learning; one cannot happen without the other.

BEYOND MODERNIST NOTIONS OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

Chapter Two explicated the three variations of transformative learning theory—for the autonomous individual, for organizational effectiveness, and for social empowerment. Various theorists such as Scott (1997), Dirkx (1997), and Grabove (1997) asserted that although the transformative process may involve rational abilities and changes in cognitive structures, it also involves the extrarational. The extrarational includes the process of grieving and soul learning through myths, images, dreams, and imagination. Clark (1997) took the next step to consider wholeness and *both/and* nonfragmented thinking in adult education. For her this involved the paradox of conscious and unconscious, inner and outer, mind and body, and science and art. Interestingly, she also called this a "restoration of lost and unknown capacities" (19).

Clearly, this study bears out that the transformation process is both rational and extrarational. Yet, it has pushed further to suggest that a vital aspect of a socially transformative process is restorative learning: a restoration of ethical thinking; of organic relatedness to nature, body, and Other; and a spiritual relatedness to the cosmos. This study is also attempting to push beyond other modernist assumptions of transformative learning theory, including assumptions of anthropocentrism. As participants saw themselves connected to a larger cosmos as well as to the Earth, they moved beyond anthropocentric worldviews and humanist moralities to a much larger horizon. This, paradoxically, was part of the personal transformation that they experienced.

Widening the Horizon: Transforming Cultural Patterns

In the evaluations of the course, several participants expressed how the ideas in the course widened their horizons of the world and their working and living options:

> *Some very thought-provoking material was introduced into the mix to evoke "out of the box" thinking about work. . . . It's like [the] class opened my awareness to a whole new picture. I see that global economy (how it is) plays a role, but I more clearly see role (and potential) of individuals and then communities.*

One aspect of the larger picture was an enhanced understanding of global realities. Kate described well that at a personal level she felt the pull of a more spiritual existence, but that this was paralleled by the push to simplicity that tied her to the ecological and larger global issues. In presenting the dynamics of the global economy and contrasting this with notions of voluntary simplicity, bioregionalism, and the faces of sustainability, their sights were pulled off the personal sphere and connected to the ecological and global spheres. This was not an easy part of the process, though, as evidenced by the resistance and anger directed my way at this point in the course. Widening one's horizons is a very difficult task and, as Anne suggested, when one is so preoccupied with a sense of personal crisis, it is a shift that may not occur:

> *The information on the global economy was the area I found my mind sliding away from. I am now more aware; . . . it did ignite a spark.*
>
> *I got a little lost within the global economy and shied away from it.*

Like Anne, others found it hard to integrate the new information because it challenged their existing frameworks. It also prompted large questions that directly opposed their media-saturated viewpoints. The first tendency was to see it as an either/or proposition: "Felt his area is highly debatable. Needed more time to explore our degree of comfort with these concepts. Is global necessarily bad? Should our province reject participation in the global economy?"

Several comments illustrate the confusion and frustration at shifting sights, and yet the sense of transformation that occurred in considering a broader view:

> *What I found interestingly, is that when I began this course I thought sustainability was way outside what I was looking at. . . . And then . . . I found that it was right under my nose!*
>
> *At first, [it] was a big puzzle to me. I could not see the relevance. However, as it developed further I grasped where it was taking me, and I now believe that a new awareness of many facets of my life has been heightened. The opportunities out there are unlimited and there for the taking.*

When it finally came to developing vision statements, many of them were broad and inclusive in nature, reflecting well a broadened horizon: "A Caring, Diverse and Sustainable World. . . . I like it. It's clear, it's big and it just makes a huge difference in giving me a focus."

Jack Mezirow (1997) suggested that a perspective transformation is a transformation of worldview as well as habits of mind or way of thinking. He considered transformation as empowering an individual to think as an autonomous agent rather than to act uncritically on the received ideas and judgements of others. Socially responsible thinkers, he said, are essential for full citizenship in a democratic society (8). This was indeed one of the goals of this study: to study how transformative learning could revitalize citizen action. It is my contention that the participants generally experienced a transformation of their worldview—a view that now considers sustainability, ecological issues, and global justice issues. It is also my contention that they are more able to think in socially responsible terms given broadened horizons. For instance, Dan's story of the Glad TV commercial and the conversation he had with his girlfriend is instructive:

> *Yes, [this is a transformation]. Subtle, profound. . . . And she says [to me], "Do you see what I mean?" I said, "What?" She goes, "You wouldn't have said that six months ago, but now the thought of 'tossable' being the thing that offends you." So it's changed, but it's deeper inside.*

Suddenly the commonplace cultural messages that permeated their attention daily through the media were viewed critically and measured against a different yardstick: environmental integrity over convenience. Jennifer confirmed that this transformed worldview has shaped her vision for her working and living:

> *Some of the material in class has reminded me of the problems humans are creating by the way we live in the world; that we cannot continue to live this way. Evaluating our current economy/living of "consume and throw away" and how this impacts the world and ecosystems has been important in shaping my vision.*

Other cultural scripts were transformed through the course as they redefined success, security, balance, meaningful work, and life purpose. For Sally, it was the transformation of the script of work, money, and status:

> *I think the most significant was the mind opening thought that you can separate your work for pay from your true work. That to me was astounding! . . . I would like to emphasize in the strongest terms possible that it was prison-releasing to know I can separate work for wages from my true work. . . . That job is not me! My work for pay is not me. Why did I think this had to define me?*

For Sally, the cultural notion that work defines a person and provides identity was transformed. This was also where the paradox of transformative and restorative learning became apparent, for as this cultural script was transformed, Sally's original identity and sense of vocation as a mother were restored. She could move against conventional thought about status and revalue that on which she had centered her earlier life. She also went further to establish a new social analysis that saw conspicuous consumption not as an ideal to reach for, but as an addiction to break, "to know that the affluent people in the latest fashion styles are robbing other human beings of the basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing."

Not only did their worldviews transform, but in some cases so did their habits of thinking. Dan said, "[I need to] try to think and experience outside the narrow Western civilization box you normally dwell in"; and Sally noted, "The course did not create a new kind of work, nor did it transform my existing work. *It went beyond by transforming my way of thinking* about my existing work" (her emphasis). A transformed worldview and habit of thinking were not the only faces of transformation.

From Having to Being: Epistemological to Ontological Transformation

Most profoundly, many of the participants experienced a transformation from a "mode of having" to a "mode of being." As Fromm (1976) defined it, the Great Masters of Living from Buddha to Jesus to Meister Eckhart teach that to reach the highest stage of human development, individuals must forsake a craving for possessions. Almost anything can be craved for and possessed—from money, people, and knowledge to status. Fundamentally, one "uses an external object in order to exist, in order to be oneself" (Fromm, 1989: ix). Fromm advocate that one must break through this property structure of one's existence. Elgin (1993) called this the move from the materiality of existence to the spirituality of existence. The Buddhist tradition suggests that as we enlarge our consciousness, we can move toward nonattachment, nongreed, and nonillusion.

The most significant aspect of the participants' transformation was the realization that, beyond a certain point, material things do not add much to the quality of life and most often detract from it. This was one of the central issues for Dan—to move from his white picket fence image of family and breadwinner success to full, rounded relationships as the mark of a "good person." Kate also struggled with the comfort of consumption. "Consumption may not be the answer," she said. "I need to work out my life so my needs are met internally rather than trying to meet them externally through consumption." In a few months she observed, "I have taken action to focus on people and relationships rather than "things" and my work. . . . I feel more powerful."

Herein lies the paradox of restorative and transformative learning: Whereas one begins to critique and separate from conventional cultural values (transformation), other values must replace them, suppressed values that are recovered (restoration). For Kate this is "having enough time to really nourish relationships and "be there" for people, "not having to live by the clock." As she critiqued the fragmenting impact of clock time in the industrial era (transformation), she began to revalue the importance of organic time (restoration). Anne's heightened awareness of the burden of accumulated stuff prompted her to "declutter," as did many other participants. She said, "I think reframing some of the things has been the first step, . . . reconnecting with extended family. . . . I've made some small steps." As Mezirow (1991) suggested, these examples bespeak a transformed worldview and action that are integrally related.

With what were they replacing the having orientation? The "being" orientation is, in Meister Eckhart's words, where people should not consider so much what they are to *do*, as what they *are* (cited in Fromm, 1976: 64). Our rational ego is our doing/having aspect, and he maintained that to let go of one's ego and all its props is to "be." As described above, this centered around a renewed sense of being a part of relationships—both intimate and global. For Garth, this revaluing was a "spiritual thing" through enjoying each other and making a habit to take the time to "sit out there by the flower bed and watch the morning sun and look around." Being then is experiencing, being fully present in the moment rather than rehashing the past or yearning for something in the future. Fromm (1999) called this "the process of mutual alive relatedness," in which one overcomes the barrier of separateness as I and the Other participates in the "dance of life" (87-88).

There are two aspects to being that are essential. The first is that being is identified not by what is possessed, but by what is given out. Liz, one of the guest instructors, identified this as "giving back to the community." When one stops finding security and identity by clinging to possessions or ego-things like status, then one becomes "empty" or "poor in spirit," as well as becoming free to love and share without the fear of "not having enough." There are no longer roles or personas, for these are part of our possessions, our masks that are presented to the world. These fade as it is realized that personal dreams are not shared by others in the way that one thought, and their ego occupies a much smaller place. Paradoxically, however, is an awakening to "the infinitude of Being as the true measure of their own finitude and particularity" (Guindon, 1992: 157). Ethicist Andre Guindon called this moving into the ethics of response where one develops the capacity for radical empathy (157).

It is my contention that the participants generally began this transformation from having to being by naming the power of materiality over their lives and by consciously making choices that took them away from material priorities. They also began assuming the mode of Being by becoming attentive to intimate relationships, nature relationships, and spiritual relationships. They began to create a new rhythm between having, doing, and being.

Often in the midlife crisis literature the having orientation prevails despite the talk of authenticity and integrity. It is my contention that midlife crises are indicative of a larger culture that has placed its measure of life well-lived on a having orientation. Further, a sign of authenticity and integrity is often simply a new form of having, having that is unconventional and therefore symbolic of authenticity. Perhaps the sign of authenticity and integrity is having less and loving more. Guindon (1992) suggested that the stage of integrity is characterized by a reconciliation to "what is," ordinary though it may be, and authentic presence to the Being of all things and all people. This is a holistic sense of participation in the cosmic order. "Beyond that is only illusion" (162).

Paul Tillich (1952) considered this the paradox of the "courage to be." The self has a polar character—that of self (I) and world (Other). The polar elements that correspond are individualization and participation. The human task is to affirm the self as a self that is separate, unique, centered, and self-determining. Jung called this task the task of individuation; Tillich called this the courage to be as oneself. The other human task which is most commonly forgotten in a having-oriented society is affirming the self as world. The self is at once itself, but fundamentally all other things. It does not just belong to the world; it is the world. Tillich called this the courage to participate. Participation means to be a part of—a group, a movement, of essences, of life itself.

Although the participants wanted to participate, they felt constrained in doing so. Often participation is viewed as weakness, needing to rely on others. When the participants discussed the development of neighbourhoods into communities, this was the single largest barrier—wanting privacy and not having to relate and rely on others for small things. It was more efficient just to own and do for oneself. This, then, is the largest challenge facing our society: the loss of self as participant in the world. Reflections on avenues to re-create this participation are discussed below.

In sum, what is absent in current transformative learning theory is a conceptualization of social participation in Western society beyond representative democracy and oppositional forces such as social movements—social movements developed as free-flowing collectivities that strategically position themselves to create policy change. Old social movements were organized to counter industrial bureaucracies. Yet, the old movements themselves are often impersonal and bureaucratic. New social movements expanded to include issues and groups predicated on identity building and various ideological standpoints. Michael Welton (1993) suggested that these new social movements are crucial because they are defending civil society against the colonization of a technocratic society brought about by the crisis of the lifeworld and ecosystem. This study confirms this viewpoint and points to the necessary development of extrainstitutional politics and extramarket economics that will undercut existing political and economic relations.

Existing transformative learning theory largely stops short by focussing only on the transformation of the self as an autonomous individual. This psychologizing of transformation reinforces individualism, in which the basic unit of change is the individual in a dialogical group (Scott, 1997). Transformation is not primarily an epistemological process, a change of worldview and habits of thinking; it is also an ontological process, a change in "being" in which fundamental relationships to the world change. Scott suggested that knowing through the body and Dirkx (1997) suggested that knowing through the soul are aspects of this kind of transformative process. Yet, these are still largely anthropocentric views—that transformation is essentially a human process—rather than fundamental cosmological relatedness.

Transformative learning theory has neglected the self as integral participant in the unfolding creativity of the cosmos that involves all relations. Rather than transformation being largely an epistemological change, this study has demonstrated that it is also an ontological change in which the very nature of Being is transformed. Beingness permeates the cosmos, and although humans play a unique role, they play only one role. There is an ontological transformation when individuals see themselves as part of the larger Principle of Life. Whereas it was difficult to widen the participants' horizons through cognitive information and rational thinking, this happened much more powerfully through extrarational processes such as meditation, reintegration into nature, and group belongingness.

Further, the connection between awareness and action cannot be assumed for, as the participants described, there are many constraints on such actions. This brings us to an important paradox: As the participants became integrated into a mode of being rather than having, they sought avenues for doing or for socially responsible actions that contribute to the community. As Krishnamurti (1981) stated, when your mind, your heart, your whole being are totally aware of being all, then you have broken the program of fragmentation and alienation. This was not a process that was generalized among the participants nor one that was fostered pedagogically. Yet, it points to the task of fostering living practices of wholeness that do not differentiate the individual as autonomous from the undividedness of reality. This process can transform transformative learning practices.

Social transformation theory is predicated on the "fantasy of action through efficient causes," where injustice is named and oppression rooted out through political and social action. Shifting to a "wholeness" approach is to flow with the energies that are creating a new way of working and living as well as the capacity for self-aware and other-aware living. Sustainability was used in this study not as a utopian dream but as a tool of imagination. When imagination, not anger, is provoked, change flows easily and naturally. For the middle class, critique is not an empowering starting point but can be subsequently introduced after fostering the hope for and imagination of new social and ecological relations. It is necessary to broaden the horizons of the participants beyond daily lived individualism before critique becomes relevant. This reversed process unleashed the energy of the participants through connectedness to a much larger reality: the creative dynamics of a living universe.

Living Transformation: The Paradox of Restorative and Transformative Learning

The concept of transformative learning traditionally used in the adult education field excludes from view the need for restorative learning, including space for ethical reflection. Theory and practice often specify utopian endpoints and concentrate on resistance building, or they instrumentalize transformative learning to organization change, thereby co-opting its full critical power. Both leave unreflected the pedagogical vocation of questioning "what is the good?" and thus neglect a space for the clarification and mobilization of ethical autonomy. Psychological theories of adult transformation do not account for the social historical context that shapes individual consciousness and can block ethical action or for the position of humans as integral participants in the unfolding universe, therefore continuing the fragmented thinking implicit in the Modern Age.

Similarly, approaches to transformation theory rarely question the need for preservation and restoration in a world that privileges change for change's sake. The participants emphasized that not all things require transformation and that they were seeking spaces that affirmed and preserved their ethics of honesty, integrity, fairness, courage, respect, loyalty, community service, and the common good. Through the creation of such a space they could identify internal and external ethical conflicts and elaborate a coherence. However, this learning was not transformative as it restored the existing form. Dialectically, however, these participants strengthened their sense of ethical efficacy and moved beyond habitual practice—indeed transforming their relationship to work and the world. Further, through a process of restorative learning, they were able to begin to recover unalienated relationships to time, space, body, and human relations. Again dialectically, as they restored these forms of relatedness, they were transforming cultural, social, and economic structures. Therefore, beyond emphasis solely on transformation, adult educators need to consider animating restorative learning, particularly ethical reflection on "the good." The heart of transformation—whether for a Latin American peasant or a Canadian middle-class professional—is the "call to life."

AN ECOLOGY OF WORKING AND LIVING: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

What are the implications from this study for the current structure of working and living? All the participants found themselves alienated from basic social and physical processes by clock time, bureaucratization, utilitarianism, mechanism, consumption, individualism, compartmentalization, and instrumentalism. These industrial structures have deeply shaped our habits of body, mind, and spirit. The powerful interlocking cultural messages of success, security, identity, and worth—often most stridently protected by those closest to us—are difficult to transform when there are few support structures. In looking for "living practices of wholeness" in the community and stoking the imagination, an ecology for working and the art of living can be regenerated.

Ethical Sanctuary and Work

One of the primary contributions that the field of adult education can make to society is to consciously provide ethical sanctuary. There are few spaces for honest and earnest ethical reflection that do not resort to judgement or "excommunication" from the organization. This is the best part of both the liberal and critical traditions in education, in which, as Parker Palmer (1998) described in *The Courage to Teach*, good teaching is beyond technique and fear. It is to place some vital questions in our midst—of the good, the valuable, the useful, the true, the just, and the beautiful—as they relate to all aspects of our shared life. These are questions that are little considered in a world driven by technology, efficiency, and profit; but they lay just below the surface, troubling many citizens. Individuals need a safe place to name and examine the implications of various ethical systems in their workplaces and in society at large. To bring these to expression through knowledgeable dialogue is the first vital step toward revitalizing citizen action.

Weber (1947) has demonstrated that bureaucracies are inimical to direct democracy; therefore all transformative learning for organizational change such as total quality management, worker empowerment, and learning organizations initiatives will not succeed if they do not face this essential opposition. Too many adult education programs are tethered to the need to help employees "buy into" the latest initiative. This is a question of where power is invested (in efficiency or in democracy) and for what purpose (for profit or social responsibility). People of good will and strong ethics find themselves listing rudderless in a work organization that heeds opposing ethics. Requiring employees to "sell their soul" in exchange for a job is a dangerous dynamic for a society that confesses democracy and individual right to expression. This study has demonstrated that the various models for flattening organizations, enhancing service and accountability, and heightening worker empowerment have actually led to increased worker control and exploitation. Although this study cannot claim a representative sample, informal observation verifies this as a general experience. Furthermore, in the era of de-jobbing, in which full-time employees are reduced, democracy is further threatened as workers no longer have protection and influence. Workers, now more than ever, have less space to speak and act on their ethics and to challenge the work systems in which they find themselves. This can be addressed in several ways.

It is important to come to terms with the meaning of vocation, particularly professional vocation, and its expression in bureaucratic organizations. As workers become more professionalized, work that was done in social movements or community volunteerism is now done by paid professionals. For this reason, more workers project their ethical horizons into their job and consider it as a vehicle for civic responsibility. However, given the gap between the needs of a bureaucracy and the needs of professional vocationism, workers will continue to be disillusioned and disheartened. Workers need to embrace their disillusionment by encouraging both their unions and professional organizations to recapture their roots as "movements" and use their influence to call bureaucratic dynamics to account. Unions and professional organizations themselves need to consider their levels of bureaucratization, their monopoly on knowledge, and their commitments. How can they organize differently to best express their aims? Democracy may be less efficient, but it will continue to be choked by utilitarian and instrumental aims that foster ethical passivity.

Professionals themselves need to separate their sense of vocation from their work organizations and reinvest it within their community of professionals. These organizations can recapture their *raison d'être* by exerting their ethical priorities within work organizations as well as committing themselves to community volunteerism, where there are fewer constraints on vocational service. By living simply and freeing up what would otherwise be work time, professionals can "give back" into their communities where the needs are greatest. Jeremy Rifkin (1995) called this the *social economy* and raised many possibilities for enacting this.

Finally, and most radical, is for the business world to develop associations of business professionals who have a sense of vocation that goes beyond profit bottom lines and stockholder gain. There are many networking associations for enhancing personal and organizational advantage, but what would happen if these were expanded to consider the role of business in society and its ethical responsibilities? Currently, business is reliant on the activation of personal morals and ethics rather than a professional association that stipulates a base code of ethics and monitors its members for compliance.

Although citizen watchdog organizations exist and many small businesses are taking on the mandate of social responsibility, there is little sense of vocation in the business field. Underfunded and understaffed nongovernment organizations cannot be expected to be the sole watchdogs of corporate and government operations.

Paul Hawken (1993) suggested that the fundamental role of business is not to make money or make things to sell. The ultimate role of business is "to increase the general well-being of humankind through service" (1). The task is to reestablish a larger horizon for the role that business is to play in society. This includes providing work, a living wage, and a positive impact on human and natural communities. Making money is totally meaningless if it is destroying the life base of the planet and rendering a portion of the world's population superfluous. Such professional associations have the power to raise questions about which products ought to be developed and how technology should be used, and to judge labour practices and ecological impact. They also can breathe new life into a sense of social contract between employers and employees that engenders a sense of mutual obligation. Hawken listed various associations like this that already exist in the United States and are examples of positive influence and codes of conduct. These require encouragement, participation, and replication.

In sum, one of the keys to revitalizing citizen action is attending to the intellectual and ethical associations within society—outside state or corporate bureaucracies. These are the carriers of priorities higher than efficiency and profit and re-create an additional forum for ethical discussion. Adult educators can play an important role in this by reintroducing ethical concepts into their teaching and training which will be carried outward into society at large. They can also be instigators of these intellectual and ethical associations.

Radical Relatedness and Work

For many people, a sense of vocation has been elided with paid work. I recently read an article by an individual in which she experienced transformative learning when her personal identity became that of "faculty developer" through critical reflection and full immersion (Wilcox, 1997). This was advocated as a model. We are not our jobs, and we should not be encouraging individuals to invest their personal identities totally into their work. Transcending this elision requires rediscovering a larger horizon for work. It is vital to begin to draw the distinction between Great Work, True Work, and Bread Work.

What has been handed down to us over the centuries is a collage of contradictory ideas about work, as reviewed in Chapter Four. From the Greeks came the idea that the labour of the mind is more important than the labour of the hand. They also considered the good life to be the leisured life. From the Christian tradition we have come to regard work as polar opposites: a punishment for lack of obedience as well as an expression of the dignity of the divine, where work is the image of a creating God. From the Middle Ages and guild organizations we have the notion of a craftsperson who takes great pride and finds dignity in quality work of the hand. From the Protestant Reformation we understand work as a calling, a vocation that is a life-task given an individual by the Divine. And from the Industrial Revolution we have an economic view of work in which labour is the basis of national wealth and individuals are like the machines they operate. The original word *jobbe* meant piece as in piecework, and productive tasks were broken into efficient, mechanical parts. Accompanying this is work as drudgery and onerous toil and the need to develop incentives to motivate workers. As the profit motive has become established, so has the notion that time is money and idleness is evil.

Several theologians such as Matthew Fox (1994) and Thomas Berry (1999) are calling for a return to a sacred notion of work, referring to this as The Great Work. The disenchantment of the universe during the modern, scientific era means that we have lost a sense of the connectedness of our activity within the biosphere and cosmos. The work of our hands and minds mirrors the universe back to itself and contributes to the unfolding creativity of the universe. Most sacred writings in the great faith traditions understand daily human activity as intimately connected to the Great Work. Drawing from a Buddhist notion of work, Schumacher (1979) considered another purpose of work as enabling every person to perfect his/her gifts and be a good steward. Paradoxically, it is recognizing both the greatness and humbleness of our work. It also makes no distinction between human activity—as paid or nonpaid—but all those activities that are related to the life-giving, creative impulses of the universe. Investing our identity in this larger notion of promoting Life is more existentially satisfying.

By connecting with the Great Work, we can find our true work as individuals. True work is the unique expression of our souls and spirits, the manifestation of our inner being in the material and social world. Through us, the larger principle of Life becomes manifest as well. Again, the Buddhist notion of Right Livelihood suggests that work that is meaningless, boring, or engaged in only to obtain leisure misunderstands the basic truths of human existence; namely, that the joy of work and the bliss of leisure are complementary and not to be separated or hierarchically ordered. To deprive humans of work is to deprive them of the conditions of dignity and freedom that nourish the spirit. The purpose of finding one's true work or vocation is to serve our communities and learn to work in cooperation with others so that we transcend our egocentricity that characterizes childhood.

True work is about the development of our personhood. True work, then, is not necessarily about paid work. It is about all the tasks that need to be done in human communities. It is also about all of who we are—as paid workers, citizens, parents, children, lovers, friends, and volunteers. It is the consistency in our inner selves, the central place from which to engage in the various tasks of our lives. Matthew Fox (1994) talked about both the inner and outer work: Inner work connects us to the spiritual realm and outer work connects us to the relational and material realm. "Work is that which puts us in touch with others, not so much at the level of personal interaction, but at the level of service in the community" (5).

Bread work, then, is the work that we need to do to provide the basic necessities for ourselves and our families. It is either working for monetary income, exchanging goods and services, or directly providing necessities by gardening and animal husbandry. When bread labour is positioned within this greater schema, then the work you may do for pay is not your identity and the measure of your life is not your wages. The task around our bread work is re-imagining how it contributes to sustaining Life in natural and human communities. Bread work should be available to all, ecologically responsible, socially useful, and personally satisfying.

In sum, our work is our human activity in the world which relates us to sustaining Life—maintaining our personal health, attending to the well-being of our families, serving our communities, sustaining the integrity of natural systems, and "being" connectedness to the Great Work. Deciding what part to be paid for is how priorities can be sorted out appropriately.

Widening Horizons: Re-Imagining Work and Citizenship

The concept of sustainability was used in this study as an organizing principle and conceptual tool to build hope and stoke the imagination. It is important that it not be considered a utopian endpoint requiring global management or an ideology where no other dissenting stories are allowed. Yet, the concept of sustainability can broaden the horizons of what is possible in society and in work, particularly. It also has the possibility of transforming the way we think.

What was presented in the course were 10 sustainability principles which can be used as a guide for re-imagining work. These principles, provided in Appendix B, have the potential to transform existing structures of work and to invent completely new forms of work. When one considers these principles and the potential, there ought not to be unemployment. There is plenty of work to do, but it needs to be catalyzed at the community level and not left to the market, where people need to fit themselves into the economic system as it exists.

However, long-term change also requires community forums where people and ideas can meet on a regular basis. When people are put in touch with energy, hope, and community resources, they are able to slowly put their action plans into practice. These community centers can be a place where energy coalesces and new ideas have the possibility of finding sponsors to make them happen. Inventors, innovators and industry can meet on new grounds of interests. Educators can meet people of good will who want to make a difference. These centres can be places that provide new routes for citizen action and enable citizens to take back their communities from the colonization of the systems world. They can be models that transcend the traditional bipolarization of business and nongovernment organizations. They can blend the best of both endeavours to create a new vision of civil society. Indeed, many of these models already exist and need encouragement and support.

From Having to Being: Lifestyles to Lifeways

Finally, we need to begin thinking about lifeways rather than purchased lifestyles. When we speak of lifestyles we are referring to the commodities and services we purchase to portray a certain image. This image is usually founded on a professional identity or a particular notion of success that is socially accepted within a particular group of people. We consider freedom to be the freedom to choose which image we will adhere to. This is an anemic definition of freedom and one that is undermining democratic processes and full citizenship.

Speaking of lifeways is to speak of a way of living that nourishes our Beingness. Adults pride themselves on having mastered a rough and tumble world where basic values are not necessarily present, yet many silently yearn for this simple goodness. We rely on consumptive versions of celebrations to restore these values temporarily, such as trying to "get the Christmas spirit." A spiritual blossoming in our society illustrates that these ancient sensibilities still exist. Reforming Western civilization's present practices through new policies does not go deep enough to create nonconsumptive lifeways.

Lifeways are about developing ways of living for individuals and communities that are integrated into local ecosystems. Far from a manifesto, it is an conscious way of thinking that takes seriously the call to be part of the dance of life, to celebrate the human place in the whole. It is an ongoing voyage of discovery as members of a living universe.

NEW RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study points to many ongoing and fruitful lines of research. Longitudinal interviewing of the original participants and interviewing of subsequent course participants would augment the data and offer reflections on the long-term impact of such a learning process. In particular, further insight into the catalytic validity of this learning process for revitalizing citizen action can be obtained. Replanning of the course has involved systematic introductions of content on workplace ethics and the incorporation of the universe story. Further research of the impact of this content is important. Finally, mentoring additional facilitators in this transformative learning process can further highlight the transferability of this pedagogical process. Ongoing research in this way would enhance the findings on restorative and transformative learning.

Further articulation is also required on the implications of this research for transforming the current structures of work amidst contemporary economic structures. The following questions have been raised through this research and require further analysis: How are the contradictory material interests of the middle class related to kinds of citizen activity and the perception that avenues for effective participation are lacking? Does contract work outside of large bureaucratic workplaces intensify the marginalizing forces of the neoliberal global economy and reduce the possibility for structural change, or is it part of a collective resistance to marginalization, particularly among women? What kinds of choices do participants make when the conflictual nature of modern ethics is revealed, and how does this relate to potentialities for social transformation? Further research in these areas of interest can build upon the findings in this study.

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APPENDIX A:

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF WORK AND THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

A BRIEF HISTORY OF WORK

In his anthropological history of work, Applebaum (1992) traces the shifts in the concept and social organization of work. In Homer's day, nobles and their deities worked with their hands within small-scale cultures based on family, religion and decentralized social and political authority. With the development of the centralized Greek city-states, a division of labour developed along with the disdain for manual work. As Aristotle articulated, the definition of the good life is the leisure to develop mind and body. In the Roman Empire as well, only independent farming, which was considered natural work, was honoured. Those who worked for others, wageworkers and slaves, were considered unfree, including doctors and teachers.

Within Christian theology, work is considered as divine in the image of a God who laboured to create the world and then rested. However, labour was also a punishment for Adam and Eve and so work was considered a means of overcoming a sinful state. In the Middle Ages, societies were local and primarily self-sufficient, interdependent communities that revolved around service and work in exchange for military protection. Aquinas considered this as 'reasoned' for the maintenance of the common good. In the cities, guilds began to develop where they trained apprentices for various manual trades and derived the ideal traditions of quality where the worker has complete control over the tools and materials in an environment of independence. From Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation came the notion of work as a Christian calling, or vocation, in the sense of a life-task commanded by Divine Will. This embrace of duty within worldly affairs was considered the highest moral activity for an individual, imparting daily life with religious meaning, in contrast to the pursuit of monastic asceticism as the most acceptable form of Earthly life (Weber, 1930: 80). As Max Weber traces, this Protestant ethic supported economic acquisition as an end to work in and of itself. The capitalist spirit, along with the religious encouragement of thrift, forked in two directions: the accumulation of capital (surplus) for business enterprise as well as the levellers and diggers who stressed the common ownership of land and redistribution of wealth, laying the foundation for utopian socialism.

In the Enlightenment, Locke contributes his theory that labour is the basis for property which then led to Smith's labour theory of value—where people who perform productive work are the core of a nation's wealth assisted by machines. This then is the origin of the instrumental ethic of treating individuals as means to an end that eventually came to dominate the handcraft tradition. The underlying metaphor is that humans not only operate machines but they operate ***like*** machines. The original word *jobbe* meant 'piece', as in piecework—a discrete, mechanical task (Fox, 1994). If the universe and humans are considered to be machines—then they are essentially soulless, purposelessness, and predictable. Work is drudgery only to be motivated by behavioural incentives like paychecks and vacations. As well, workers themselves require repair and upgrading to keep them productive (Fox, 1994). The corollary is that if humans operate like machines, then they can be replaced by machines.

In another ethical reversal, Smith's ubiquitous invisible hand of competitive greed was considered the guiding force where the actions of each worker and owner would somehow translate into collective good—the creation of prosperity, harmony and justice (Sbert, 1992).

In contrast, Marx argues that work is the essential activity that accords human beings their dignity. Yet, industrial society has alienated workers from their creativity, the full fruits of their productivity and the process of production. Industrial workers no longer have full control over the production process from the creative idea to the finished product. They also do not receive the full worth of their labour. Therefore the inherent motivation to work and the sense of satisfaction from work in the twentieth century continues to decline. Work has become an instrumental activity for consumption only and human resource strategies develop as a way to encourage desires—particularly for material wealth.

Building from Marx, Hannah Arendt concludes that human praxis is comprised of labour, work and action, where each is indispensable. For Arendt, the current human condition of *labouring* are those activities associated with the biological necessities and the ongoing cycle of producing and consuming with no lasting effects. *Work* for her is craft work wherein people develop durable objects, from tools to art, lasting objects that are not strictly consumables. It is this creative work that is distinctively human and which is sorely lacking in industrial society—a society driven by consumables for the satisfaction of material needs only. Finally, *action* is to have the freedom to shape one's destiny, endow meaning and develop a unique identity. Matthew Fox adds that "healthy work draws us into our future, into our destinies, into being history makers" (1994: 11).

Also in dialogue with Marxism, Pope John Paul II writes in the *Laborem Exercens* (On Human Work, 1962), arguably the most important encyclical establishing the official Roman Catholic view of work, that work is of fundamental importance for two reasons. It transforms nature and transforms humans while expressing their dignity within society. The primary principle is that of 'labour over capital', where labour is the primary cause of production, not a mere instrument. In this he advocates that labour is subject not object. The Pope does not take the idealist approach in the Aristotelian tradition where spirit and ideas are a higher order of life from manual work and the material conditions of life. Rather he opts for the view that consciousness and spirituality are embedded in the historical and material conditions, with the capacity for action within these given conditions.

Ivan Illich also offers an important treatise on work, particularly on the "disabling" professions. Illich considers that the professionalism of the twentieth century is a form of control over work that increases the servitude of people to commodities, including the commodification of many kinds of social services. Professionalized social services increase the impotence and incompetence of people by imputing needs which can only be met by technocratic experts who retain the authority to prescribe what needs to be done, for whom and by whom (1977: 16). Illich calls for a post-professional ethos.

The final view on work offered here is from Schumacher who offers a Buddhist notion of Right Livelihood. The view of work as a necessary evil where the aim of the employer is to reduce labour to a minimum cost for maximum output and where the aim of the employee is to have income without employment is anathema in Buddhism. Work has a threefold purpose: to give humans a chance to utilize and develop their faculties; to enable humans to overcome their egocentredness by joining with other people in a common task; and to bring forth the goods and services needed for a becoming existence (1973: 45). To organize work that is meaningless or boring or for the achievement of leisure and goods outside of work is misunderstanding the basic truths of human existence; namely, that the joy of work and the bliss of leisure are complementary and cannot be separated. To not work is to deprive humans of the conditions of dignity and freedom that nourish the spirit. Hence, work is for the purification of character, not the intensification of wants and needs through expansion of consumption.

A Brief Analysis of Contemporary Work

In contrast, an analysis of the contemporary conditions of work reveals that the structure of work is changing dramatically but the underlying power dynamics remain unchanged. Rather than constituting a "new economy" as touted, it is exacerbating the key conditions of alienating work.

The phrases "Going Global for the 90's", "The Global Age", "Global Competitive Edge" and "Global Survival" permeate our media and have an air of urgency and cornucopian promise to them. For the purposes here, globalization is defined as the complex interrelations between states and societies, national and international forces where the constraints of geography as well as the perceptions of this constraint recede (Held, 1995; Waters, 1995). As a result, there is less recognition for territoriality, time boundaries and cultural specificity in a globalized world (Waters, 1995). And, in this sense, globalization has a reflexive nature, where "the world 'moved' from being merely 'in itself' to the problem or possibility of being 'for itself'" (Robertson, 1992 in Waters, 1995: 45). Therefore, whether a corporate executive or an environmentalist, the more the world is viewed as "one place" or a "global village", the more it will become such.

As an ideology, globalization compels the belief that it is an inevitable force, operating beyond human control to transform the world (Waters, 1995: 3). It is this inevitability that creates the feelings of exhaustion from a frenetic pace, despair, lack of control, the futility of resistance, and the sense of incompetence to keep up with the information and technology overload. Saul (1995) claims that this 'unconsciousness' of globalization is an ideology that primarily supports the interests of the new global corporate class who gain immensely from a globalized world.

Economic globalization is characterized by a new global information economy geared toward the application of science, technology, information and management to production, trade and consumption (Castells, 1993). New technologies have had profound implications for the structure of capitalism. First, monetary speculation is made possible through technology where the key to profits is not production but investment strategies—what is called the casino economy. Second, first world industry could not retrofit their production lines to incorporate the new technologies without labour resistance and decreasing profit margins. Many industries broke their social contract, divested and left in search of plentiful cheap and unorganized labour, tax holidays, stable investment climates and duty-free exports on assembled good. To continue to re-negotiate development loans, many Southern nations responded by establishing free trade zones. This resulted in the manufacturing graveyards throughout the industrialized world.

Correspondingly, with technology and information changing so quickly, the entire production process has been restructured to emulate electronic time and speed. Hence, labour forces have been downsized along new organizational ideologies that incorporate 'just-in-time' workforces, 'just-in-time' inventories, total quality management, teamwork and flexible/adaptable workers. Ponderous production processes have been rationalized and streamlined to 'take the fat' out. Hence, businesses restructured to downsize/ rightsize/ flatten their organizations and reengineer their work processes. Consequently, the whole notion of a 'job', let alone a stable, long term job with a living wage and benefits, has become antiquated. As Wm. Bridges (1994) suggests, jobs inhibit change. This "de-jobbing" ideology is a major factor in creating the current levels of unemployment, underemployment and the normalization of job insecurity.

One pressing aspect of political globalization is the overshadowing of the nation-state by supranational organizations and the independent power of the TNCs. Over 25 percent of all the world's production is now carried out by transnational corporations (TNCs), translating into enormous political weight. Through such organizations as the Trilateral Commission, World Bank and International Monetary Fund, they have promulgated a neo-liberal ideology centering on minimal government and a laissez-faire market. Waters (1995) suggests that the decreasing sovereignty of the nation-state translates into the inability of nations to exert financial and ideological control within their own borders and to provide the social welfare goods demanded. Through the acceptance of Structural Adjustment Plans to facilitate debt repayment, nations are expected to discourage domestic consumption and increase export earnings. Nations are to achieve this by privatizing the public sector and significantly reducing social spending—particularly on health-care, education and social assistance. The primary objective is to dismantle the welfare state, as the belief is that inequality is both inevitable and necessary. It is thought that citizens need to be weaned from dependence on the state and to become competitive in the global market (Marchak, 1991). Further, Waters (1995) argues that what is unique to globalization is the global electronic flow of culture—ideas, information, values, tastes and styles. The cultural homogenizing implicit in the global export of McWorld consumerism works to manipulate wants and tastes to assist the spread of the global economy.

Issues in the Industrial Model of Work

Neo-liberal globalization is failing workers, citizens, and the life base of this planet. Listening to a week of news, the magnitude of social and environmental issues described is profound. The industrial culture is characterized by the modern complex of bureaucracy, industrialism, urbanism, the market economy, scientism and militarism. It is undergirded by the values of competitive individualism, rationality, growth, efficiency, specialization, centralization and giantism (Friberg & Hettne in Adams, 1993: 215). This complex of dynamics and values have now coalesced into globalization that is a "large-scale version of the economic theories, strategies and policies that have proven spectacularly unsuccessful over the past several decades" (Mander, 1996). As explained by alternative business leader, Paul Hawken, the dominant commercial culture believes that all resource and social inequities can be resolved through development, invention, high finance, and growth (Hawken, 1993: 5). Yet, industrial economics has separated production processes from the land, the land from people and ultimately, economic values from personal values.

Despite the utopian euphoria that accompanies the vision of globalization, exploitation is intensified. A central dynamic of globalization is the process of removing from individuals and communities the ability to sustain themselves or to sustain the regenerative capacity of the Earth. As Goldsmith summarizes, "Cooperative interactions and services, once performed freely and successfully within communities, have been monetized and removed from any semblance of local control, thus making all people vulnerable to distant interests (1996: 501). Once a community has lost its exclusive use of their local wealth through privatization or exportation by absentee owners, then exploitation and destruction rapidly follow. As Nozick (1994) explains, the loss of jobs is often not seen as connected to the loss of community or as the intentional dismantling of social and land relationships—relationships that traditionally provided meaning and identity but now are impeding expansion of the global economy. "Resources" and wealth continue to be diverted away from meeting community needs and local ecologies are laid waste. Through the process of expansion, mergers and buyouts, thousands of towns, neighbourhoods, cities, regions and entire countries are being marginalized and written off as bad investments. Ties to family, communities, community service and spiritual pursuits, all aspects of civil society, have become impediments to personal and national wealth production (Marchak, 1991).

The pretense of assisting the least developed countries and regions to 'catch up' no longer exists. Castells suggests that the international division of labour has given way to a new multipolar division of labour where the Fourth World and other marginal rural economies are clearly left behind (Castells, 1993). Correspondingly, Hart (1992) and Rifkin (1995) suggest that a professional knowledge elite is being created who do the bidding of the capitalist transnational class. This emerging knowledge elite is a small, highly mobile, high-tech, top-level cadre of professional, managerial, entrepreneurial, scientific, technical and educational workers. They are undergirded by a large underclass of service sector McJobs where work is Latinamericanized (low status, low paid and low-skilled including dangerous, unhealthy, repressive and exploitative work in the free trade zones), housewifized (characterized by unprotected, precarious, home-based, sometimes illegal, and unsustainable work relations) and technologically displaced. This gives weight to the argument that there is a widening skills gap where higher-level skills including creativity and autonomy are required for 'knowledge work' and de-skilling for the service sector. Rifkin goes on to suggest that despite greater productivity and larger profits for the transnational corporations (TNCs), a 'near-workerless world' of jobless production and profit is being created where there are structurally fewer jobs and substantially increased numbers of permanently unemployed, fast becoming an outlaw class.

The neo-liberal ideology contends that there is an excess of democracy, considered the tyranny of the majority, that is blocking global economic development. Nader and Wallach (1996) highlight the subversion of the democratic process in order to gain approval for GATT and NAFTA. The ability of nation-states to now put in place regulations to protect environmental, cultural, health, food safety, education, labour rights including child labour or other social goals is strictly limited. However, powers to protect the intellectual rights of corporations or their 'right' to invest anywhere globally was extended.

The rapaciousness of the Industrial Age is evidenced in the multiplying ecological crises around us—from disappearing forests to dangerously low water tables, from ozone holes to melting icecaps, from species extinction to unprecedented levels of toxins in food, soil, water and air. Every living system on Earth is in decline (Brown in Fox, 1994). In the short three centuries since the Baconian creed that scientific knowledge would provide technological power over nature, economic expansion has reached the limits of the biosphere. Poverty is directly linked to environmental degradation as people are trapped or forced to move by disappearing firewood, desertification, salinization and encroaching 'development.' Ecological degradation has now become an issue of northern security and provides the pretext for a new ecotechnocracy to 'manage' the global ecology by measure extractions and emissions against the regenerative powers of the Earth and protecting the 'natural capital' threatened by 'poor people.' Cultural rights, self-determination as well as the future of the planet, are all endangered.

Learning and the Industrial Model of Work

Education, as it originated during the Industrial Revolution, was used to train populations for docility and adjustment to industrial factory work. This included habituating people to observing clock time rather than seasonal or bodily time, and accepting abstract rules rather than traditional authority (Inkeles & Smith, 1974). Today, our model of schooling promotes rationalism, scientific empiricism, instrumental reason, and economic growth. This model continues to be exported around the world and indeed schooling is regarded as a human right as well as a principal vehicle for modernization (Simmons, 1980) and now globalization. Nevertheless, it is part of a system of representation that normalizes certain social relations and renders other invisible (Escobar, 1992).

To respond to the explosion of information, fast-paced technological change, job obsolescence and the need to gain a "national competitive edge", learning is considered a key dimension of an information society where citizens must be autonomously engaged in lifelong learning. Despite the call to become a learning society to increase Canadian competitiveness in the global economy, funding for public education is declining with more of the financial burden being offloaded to provinces and municipalities, whose falling revenues have left a significant shortfall in operating monies (Barlow & Robertson, 1994). Public school spending from all three levels of government has fallen from 15 percent in 1970-71 to just over 9 percent in 1994-95 (CCPA, 1997b). Canada's education system has come under corporate scrutiny and has been blamed by the corporate sector as failing to provide adequately trained young people. This is cited as a major cause of the unemployment crisis, necessitating the restructuring of public education to adjust to the global economy. Nevertheless, it is clear that public school students are better educated, more technically skilled, have democratic sensibilities, are socially responsible and have broader access to education than ever, including more flexible bridges between schooling and work (CCPA, 1997b).

During the 1990's recession, post-secondary enrollments doubled from the 1970's, indicating that the education system provides a refuge from inability to find work and the hope that additional qualifications will increase the chances of employment. The costs of further education and retraining are increasingly being borne by the individual as the levels of funding to these programs have been cut or frozen. With less funding for post-secondary institutions, students now pay 30 percent of the operating costs through tuition compared to 13 percent in 1980. With the elimination of most provincial grant programs and reduced student loans, the debt load for Canadian students is now more than that of their American student counterparts in private institutions—$17,000 for a bachelor degree. Students from low-income families are even more likely to be barred from post-secondary education and 80 percent of current workers do not further their education due to cost.

Not only is primary, secondary and post-secondary education being restructured, but workplace learning is considered the key factor in adjusting Canada's ***existing*** workforce to the global economy. Originally, Human Resource Development (HRD), as the dominant model of workplace education since WWII was implemented to adjust the workforce to a rationalized, factory-line industrial production process. In the 1950's, HRD became the application of behavioural psychology increase productivity through motivational mechanisms. As Swift and Peerla (1996) suggest, the New HRD is little more than a smoke screen for attitude adjustment to a high risk society.

HRD works from the premises of human capital theory outlined by Alfred Schultz in the 1960's. Workers are considered one form of capital, human capital, whose skills, knowledge and attitudes enhance productivity. Their value is determined by the market and education can enhance this value. Thereby education is considered a long term investment and its rapid expansion should enhance the quality of the workforce and hence overall national productivity and economic growth. As a matter of course, formal education is to provide the skills required for an industrial economy and technological production. This instrumental view of humans means that they are no longer considered social subjects with vital ties to communities and lifelong social relations but are 'resources' to be strategically invested in, as in any other useful resource (Marchak, 1991; Todaro, 1985).

With the pressures of globalization, the Conference Board of Canada, the Business Council on National Issues and the Federal Government all agree that an employability skills profile for a high quality workforce are the following:

- People who can communicate, think, and continue to learn.
- People who demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours; are responsible, adaptable, and flexible, with positive attitudes toward change.
- People who are able to work with others for high performance (CBC, 1992).

This skills profile manifests the differences between the old and new HRD. First, proponents of the new HRD argue that more workplace training should occur directly under the auspices of businesses, eventually with public subsidies, rather than continued funding of federal educational programs (Government of Canada, 1994: 57-59). They also advocate that the cultural environment of firms need to based on new global business ideas. People need to think globally about events and consequences outside of home countries. Further, business principles, particularly the competitive ethos and entrepreneurial leadership models, need to be transferred beyond the firm to government agencies, schools, churches, hospitals, social clubs and universities (Waters, 1995: 85). Civil society is being harnessed as a resource to support production. Hence the line between the public and the private is blurred through the commodification of civil society.

Second, there is a turn toward apparently more humanistic management theory and practice. Creativity, critical thinking, relationship ability, community impulses and spirituality of workers are now being harnessed as appropriate resources in global production. In particular, the new HRD is now yoking the mass spiritual yearnings desire to organizational productivity and competitive advantage by exhorting workers to "volunteer their hearts and minds, engage in "deep learning", " build caring community", "surrender", "release creativity", and "share personal visions" all within the conversion to the corporate mission (Fenwick & Lange, 1997). Many adult workers for large corporations have experienced these compelling kinds of training programs. Yet, such programs exploit people by leaving them completely vulnerable to manipulation of their deepest needs. As Hart summarizes,

> *Such psychological co-optation is necessary because of high job insecurity, and because deteriorating social relations at the workplace have created a psychological vacuum... what is called for is a psychological, mental and behavioural preparation for living with instability, and for being able to think of oneself in terms of a renewable, exchangeable and updatable resource rather than in terms of a human being with unique experiences, hopes, wishes and dreams. (1992: 153,87)*

Third, the new HRD is promoting an ideology of training as a rationale for stripping away 'dependency-producing' income security programs and diverting funds towards retraining activities. The state is no longer expected to cushion individuals from market forces, including low-wage policies and declining living standards (Dunk, McBride & Nelsen, 1996). These training programs are founded on perpetuating an export-led strategy through faster growth (Albo, 1996). Yet, the rates of growth required to support full employment would have to exceed the postwar rates, unlikely given the shrinking 'resources' of the planet.

APPENDIX B:

POST-DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY DISCOURSES

POST DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSE

As Wolfgang Sachs (1992) has articulated, the last 50 years have been the "age of development." For Sachs, 'development' is much more than a socio-economic endeavour of national development. It is a perception which models reality, a myth which comforts societies, and a fantasy which unleashes passion (1992: i). It is a conceptual invention that has shaped both perceptions as well as intervention into material reality. This resulted in a tremendous loss of diversity through the standardization of desires and dreams, homogenization of architecture, clothing and daily objects, and a crippling of human creativity. Sachs maintains that it is time to dismantle the self-defeating mental structures of developmentalism. For it has been filled with generosity, bribery, oppression, delusions, crimes and profound disappointment. Fundamentally, development has failed and he calls for imaginative efforts to conceive of a post-development era.

Woven through the post-development discourse is the connection between development and 'the environment."[37] Both Adam Smith and Karl Marx, the original architects of modern economic theory, understood that the wealth of nations is predicated upon the natural world, yet the resource determinism that their successors implemented is progressively destroying the very life base of the planet and has profoundly manipulated humans, long considered a resource for production, into industrial processes. People as resources and the natural world as resources is intimately connected within one system of exploitation.

If human societies are to move beyond these notions of modern "development" and resource "man," societal transformation involves both human/nature relationships as well as human/human relationships. The fluidity of a globalized society needs, now lubricated by money, needs to be balanced by being re-attuned to the intricate web of natural processes that form the life base. As Vandana Shiva suggests, a return to the ancient sacred understanding of resource as "re-source" is required to make this shift. This recognizes both the regenerative capacity of the natural world and reciprocity among people. Like a fresh-water spring, re-sourcing ensures that these gifts freely given can continually rise from the ground (1992: 206). Korten (1994) calls human reciprocity the "social economy" that historically has been non-waged and non-monetized. Traditionally part of the normal social processes of mutual aid and cooperation, it has been severed by being commercialized, professionalized and bureaucratized. Similarly, Shiva suggests a shift in the cultural perception of poverty among Earth-centered peoples and a recognition that real impoverishment occurs in market economies, where the needs of masses of people cannot be met through the existing market mechanisms (1992: 215). As market mechanisms invade more and more aspects of community support systems, the abilities of communities and even households atrophy. Through appropriate learning, these capacities and perceptions can be encouraged once again as elements of a sustainable society.

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[37] The term *environment* is considered problematic because it connotes a passive "thing" on which humans act rather than dynamic living systems.

SUSTAINABILITY DISCOURSE

What Shiva and Korten are advocating for is a shift in cultural patterns as well as a shift in political and economic relations. It is this critique of cultural patterns that is the core theme within the ecological sustainability discourse. A distinction must first be drawn however between the two meanings of sustainability—sustainable development and ecological sustainability. Sustainable development discourse simply advocates a greening of business and consumption as usual. This does not incorporate a cultural critique but is a pragmatic attempt to appease both the environmentalists and business. Therefore, sustainable development incorporates the existing practices of rapid economic growth, increasing consumption and unbridled technological innovation. These approaches are often housed within a new global technocracy that presumes to measure environmental carrying capacity, design more accurate resource pricing, measure the "capital" worth of the services provided by the natural world, and to put in place a global system of pollution trade-offs. While some of these policy adjustments and technological fixes are important short-term initiatives, they do not address the deeper causes of environmental degradation and poverty.

In apocalyptic prophesying, many scientists and activists suggest we will either die by exceeding the final limits or carrying capacity of the natural world through industrial processes or we can adopt a selective and regenerative relationship with the natural world. Trusting that there is a technological answer, market solution or managerial process continues the thinking that has driven the developmentalist and social engineering paradigm and all their resultant crises to this point (Orr, 1992).

Other approaches to sustainability centre specifically on the cultural patterns of individualism, anthropocentrism, patriarchy, mechanization, economism, consumerism, nationalism, and militarism (Griffen, 1992). Griffen draws a distinction between deconstructive postmodernism that "eliminates the ingredients necessary for a worldview—to forestall totalitarian systems" and thereby begets relativistic and nihilistic thought. For him, this is ultramodernism taking modern premises to their extreme logical conclusions. He argues for constructive or revisionary postmodern thought that can transcend the modern worldview by constructing a new worldview that includes new scientific, ethical, aesthetic and religious intuitions (1992: ii).

Despite all these alternatives, Chet Bowers consider our cultures to be in denial and that this denial is reinforced through our educational systems. Our educational systems is one of the vehicles for reproducing our cultural symbols and it is these symbols and metaphors that he suggests need transformation. His analysis is that we have created a "classical double bind situation where the promotion of our highest values and prestigious forms of knowledge serve to increase the prospects of ecological collapse" (1997: 3). He looks to the symbolic frameworks within indigenous cultures that could ensure long-term survival. For him, this is cultural/bio-conservatism that conserves the cultural values, beliefs and practices that contribute to sustainable relationships with the environment (1997: 5). While he is careful not to suggest that these frameworks be borrowed or appropriated uncritically, he advocates the use of inclusive mytho-poetic creation stories, trans-generational communication, convivial forms of community, metaphorical language rooted in the natural world, and technological forms as evocative of natural designs.

David Orr concurs by suggesting that the crisis of sustainability is located in the break between knowledge, livelihood and living (1992: 32). Our knowledge, livelihoods and living have been harnessed for increasing productivity not for living well in a specific geographical location. From the perspective of educators, both Bowers and Orr believe that educational institutions are important leverage points for the transition to sustainability. Orr advocates for the development of ecological literacy that includes student knowledge of the ecological crises from scientific and philosophical viewpoints, ecological competence, the practical arts of living well, and civic commitment and competence.

Implicit in the work of Hawken, Griffen, Bowers and Orr is the view of nature as model. Exciting pragmatic innovations include the redesign of housing, cities, farms, and technologies that use the structure and function of nature systems as a matrix for design as well as for integration into existing natural systems. Bio-mimicry has extended to living machines and technologies such as bioshelters that heat and cool themselves and grow food, new water purification and air conditioning systems based on solar aquatic systems, development of new fibres based on spiders and mussels, development of solar energy based on photosynthesis, and restorative agriculture based on the edible, perennial polycultures traditionally found in various bioregions (Benyus, 1997; Todd & Todd, 1994; Lerner, 1997). As Orr puts it, "the biosphere is a catalogue recorded over millions of years of what works and what does not, including life-forms and biological processes.

Yet, by relying on ecological thinking as a model of sustainability, one has to contend with the proliferation of ecological, scientific, activist and quasi-spiritual postulations that are often contradictory and politicized. There is also significant fragmentation within the "environmental" movement(s), the term an issue in itself, that is now professionalized and fraught with internal tensions regarding philosophy and strategy. [38] The success of the environmental movement in bringing ecological issues to the public consciousness has been attributed to its very ambiguities that hold in tension a spectrum of interests (Sachs, 1992). Paradoxically, the lack of practical success has been attributed to the single issue, problem-oriented groups that are too consumed in immediate action to consider the broader cultural patterns blocking broad-based change.

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[38] There are many categorizations within the environmental movement, such as reform environmentalism, new age/aquarian conspiracy, new right political opportunists, and revised libertarian ecologists (Devall & Sessions, 1985); or resource-management environmentalists, free-market environmentalists, deep ecology, social ecology, ecofeminists, and libertarian ecologists (Bowers, 1997).

More generally, one has to steer between the Scylla of not perpetuating the anthropocentrism[39] of the rapacious industrial age and the Charybdis of extreme bio- or ecocentrism that despises human existence. For all its shortcomings, extremist versions and eclectic mix of influences,[40] one of the most subscribed to in the post-development literature and in the new sciences, is the deep ecology approach. Therefore, it requires further analysis. As Devall & Sessions (1985) describe it, deep ecology focuses its attention of the deep cultural patterns that underlie ecologically destructive societies. Deep ecology attempts to weave together the importance of the personal, the intellectual/philosophical, the social (as in commonly held worldviews), the scientific, and the spiritual. It is, as Arne Naess originally conceived it in 1973, a long range ecological view not a piecemeal, shallow approach.

Deep ecology at a personal level is cultivating an ecological consciousness and conscience at the personal level that includes an open attentiveness to that which is around us, including the nonhuman world. It is a deep questioning of ourselves and the principles that drive daily life, as they exist in the Western philosophical tradition. The questions Theodore Roszak (1972: 65) asks are, "How can the individual self maintain and increase its uniqueness while also being an inseparable aspect of the whole system wherein there are no sharp breaks between self and the *other*?" "How to decrease the increasing obsession in Western culture with dominance in all of its shapes" (Devall & Sessions, 1985). Drawing from Zen Buddhism and other ancient spiritual practices that privilege harmony and a meditative way of life, self-realization goes beyond the isolated ego-self that sees the self as separate and requiring power to compete and dominate. Rather, these spiritual practices fade the boundaries between self and other, to see oneself embedded in a universal fabric of organic wholeness. "It is the idea that we can make no firm ontological divide in the field of existence: That there is no bifurcation in reality between the human and the non-human realms . . . to the extent that we perceive boundaries, we fall short of deep ecological consciousness" (Fox, 1984: 194). The consciousness shift then is a re-enchantment of the cosmos.

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[39] Defined here as human centredness, resulting in chauvinism toward the natural world.

[40] Deep ecology has been critiqued from both the social ecology and ecofeminist perspectives. Rather than concentrating solely on philosophical ideas, Murray Bookchin insisted that the role of capital, state, technology, and other power complexes in our societies must be deconstructed to fully understand the development of these cultural ideas. For instance, the view that the overpopulation question can be dealt with by legislation rather than by examining its roots in poverty and patriarchy or that we should overshoot the Earth's carrying capacity to reduce population is evidence that deep ecologists have not yet gone deep enough. As well, the extension of "rights" and "democracy" to the whole biosphere furthers the legalism and humanist philosophies that they were critiquing. Bradford (1989) extended this social critique of deep ecology by charging that the deep ecologists, by overgeneralizing the human species as any other species, do not differentiate between groups within the human species, masking social conflict and injustice. Bradford observed that the deep ecologists, in their misanthropy, contradict their own espousal of equal rights among species and their premise that what is destroying many other species is also destroying many humans. As further evidence of misanthropy, he examined the views of the deep ecology organization Earth First! in which in their fight for wilderness preservation, they eschew human preservation. By trying to adopt a "nonideological" position, they are concealing their own ideology of "natural law." It can even be argued that Darwin, in his views of the struggle of the fittest, was imposing an industrial capitalist paradigm into nature. Similarly, Charlene Spretnak (1994) claimed that without a thorough analysis of fragmentation, alienation, dualisms and exploitation that emanate from the intersections between a patriarchal and capitalist system, the fundamental changes necessary for ecological integrity *and* social justice will not happen. Finally, they are charged with ecological reductionism that does not demystify the interrelatedness between poverty, ecological destruction, scientism, and global capitalism.

But deep ecology is not just about personal enlightenment without larger social change. It also includes "biocentric equality [where] all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and to reach their own individual forms of unfolding and self-realization" (Devall & Sessions, 1985:67). While this statement is an echo of Aristotelian *telos* and the more recent "rights" philosophies of the 18th century, the intent is to re-embed humans as equals not a superior species and to take only that which is necessary to fulfill *vital* needs (variously defined according to the physical context). Deep ecology goes beyond scientific questions to the deeper questions of "what kind of society would be the best for maintaining a particular ecosystem [i.e., the one that existed just prior to industrial society]?" While self-realization and bioregional community re-organizing is the core form of action outlined by the deep ecologists, they also recommend global grassroots networks as well as political action that would lay the legislative groundwork for community re-organization and a variety of conservation actions. In sum, deep ecology draws from various traditions such as romanticism, transcendentalism, Eastern mysticism, indigenous spiritualities as well as anarchical traditions[41] and ecological science to sketch out its "ecosophy."

> *It is no longer possible to believe that any political or economic reform, or scientific advance, or technological progress could solve the life-and-death problems of industrial society. They lie too deep, in the heart and soul of every one of us. It is there that the main work of reform has to be done—secretly, unobtrusively.....The greatest "doing" that is open to every one of us, now as always, is to foster and develop within oneself a genuine understanding of the situation which confronts us, and to build conviction, determination, and persuasiveness upon such understanding. Those who have understood know what to do. They also know that, although in a minority, they do not stand alone" (Schumacher, 1979: 36)*

Industrial society has deeply imprinted the very movement of our bodies through space and the daily almost unconscious habits constituting our working and living—from driving a car to drinking coffee to wearing jeans. Behind each *movement* is an entire historical construct of power relations that comprise the global industrial economy. Behind each *thought* is the historical construct of modernity—the accumulation of layers of cultural assumptions about what constitutes reality and how we respond to it. Indeed, as Schumacher suggests, these formulations lie deep in the heart and soul…and it is within the heart and soul that their raw power is felt as daily habits of body and mind are being pressured. Similarly, it is also within the heart and soul that ancient intuitions are rising to challenge these contemporary formulations.

SYNTHESIZING THE DISCOURSES

In conclusion, both the post-development and sustainability literature provide two counter-hegemonic discourses that together offer a powerful cultural and political economic critique. Woven together they also offer a new cultural vision that can link the twin principles of ecological sustainability and societal justice. While there are key incongruencies between the discourses given very different analytic frameworks, the boundaries of each discourse is pushed and a radically different discourse emerges that potentially enlarges each one. Rather than discuss what each discourse is missing or the inconsistencies in an attempted synthesis, it is more important as Bowers suggests, to look for a shared basis of interest for addressing a complex problem requiring diverse strategies (1997: 21). The following briefly sketches out the common bases of interest between societal transformation theory, post-development and ecological sustainability discourse and what each discourse offers to an expanded conversation. While this generalization glosses over all the strands and internal conflicts within each discourse, it offers a basis from which to teach transformatively about sustainability.

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[41] The anarchist tradition as referred to here is used in the sense of working against any organized coercive, exploitative, authoritarian, bureaucratic power in society.

The shared concern is to create significant social change that can address the fundamental causes of poverty, injustice, militarism and environmental degradation. In their own ways, all these theories have attempted to get to the root causes of these issues. The post-development discourse has a strong structural analysis of capitalism, industrialism, patriarchy, technology, and corporate control that is driving a globalized political economy and the restructuring of work. Together with radical transformation theory, it offers a theory of social change that realistically accounts for specific complexes of power and how they impact various social groups, particularly by class, gender, race, ability, sexual orientation and so forth. It does not hesitate to name the forces of domination, oppression, exploitation and alienation that are the manifestations of incongruent power relations. It accepts that conflict can be the impetus for the realization that "things are not right" and the desire for change—acknowledging that change is often a long-term struggle. But it simultaneously embraces a radical love for and a trust in common people around the world to effect significant change, for it is profoundly democratic in character.

Ecological sustainability theory has a strong systemic analysis of the deep philosophical and cultural beliefs that pattern our daily living. It broadens notions of justice and democracy by including other species and moving beyond individual rights theories to discussion of the commons and communal interests. It broadens social change theories by utilizing more contemporary insights into biological change as well as ecological exemplars for designing human systems. It focuses on aspects of the human condition that realistically limit the realization of any vision (Orr, 1992). They identify the greed, power, grasping, anger, fear, judgment and doubt that are part of the human condition. While letting go of old cultural baggage, they advocate for the moral and ethical character development that necessarily precedes a new society (Berry, 1989). Therefore, they incorporate spiritual approaches to learn how to embrace human fallibility, inconsistencies and limitations with grace while simultaneously not being resigned ourselves to "what is." Similarly, they have identified that caring deeply issues out of connectedness—to the Earth and to each other. This requires new stories to be told and new rituals to engage in where the poetic, aesthetic, spiritual and scientific intermingle.

APPENDIX C: COURSE PUBLICITY

BEYOND TRAINING: TRANSFORMING YOUR WORKING AND LIVING

New Course Description (Course 5710)
Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta
Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education Program

"to live well is to work well..."
Thomas Aquinas

Traditional approaches to job training and career development focus on providing people with skills and knowledge to fulfill specific job functions. This course will go beyond these approaches to finding or keeping employment by offering a highly unique opportunity—to create new kinds of work or to transform your existing work so that it is meaningful personally, contributes to community needs, balances individual/family well-being, and respects the natural world.

Participants in this course will:

- rethink the purpose of work—how, why and for whom we do our work
- explore the concepts of sustainability and their implication for working and living
- understand how the global economy is changing the structure of work
- contrast work as a job, career, vocation, profession and spiritual endeavor and its relation to other aspects of living
- develop personal principles for your work
- explore current social, economic and ecological issues in the Edmonton region to determine "What kinds of work are required in our community today?"
- develop a work plan either for a new business or for transforming your existing work
- make contact with the necessary consultants who can identify the resources, skills, knowledge and seed funds required to implement your work plan, and
- establish ongoing supportive relationships.

Through a highly interactive learning process, this course will be:

reflective—so participants have the time needed to sort out principles and ideas for their work,

critically thoughtful—of the ways in which we are currently expected to work,

experiential and forward-thinking—as participants visit an exciting array of existing work alternatives

action-oriented—as participants design and implement their work plans, and

skills-oriented—as participants identify the skills needed to make the transition to their preferred work.

This course is part of a doctoral research program at the University, therefore participants must be committed to full participation and able to attend all the sessions. Please register early, as it is limited to 12 participants!

Elizabeth (Beth) Lange is a Ph.D. candidate and instructor at the University of Alberta in the Faculties of Education and Extension. She has 18 years of experience as an educator in public schools, university, on-site international education, community education and transformative adult education. She was awarded the prestigious Graduate Research Award by the North American Adult Education Research conference and the FJC Seymour Fellowship in Education by the Alberta Teachers' Association for her action research with teachers on their professional development. She continues to work with a variety of groups for professional and community development.

"The best way to predict the future is to invent it."
Fee: $345 CACE Credit: 40 hours

APPENDIX D: SURVEY, INTERVIEW SCHEDULES, AND EVALUATION

PARTICIPANT SURVEY
For Course 5710
Beyond Training: Transforming Your Working and Living

All the information provided below will be held as strictly confidential. It is my intent to study the effectiveness of this course in helping you transform your working and living. To do this, I require a profile about you prior to the course. I would appreciate your willingness to provide the information below. Please return prior to or at the first class.

Today's Date: ____________________

Name: ____
Surname *First name*

Street Address____
City *Province* *Postal Code*

Contact ____
Home Phone *Work Phone* *E-Mail Address*

1. Are you: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Where were you born?____

3. What is your ethnicity/ancestry? ____

4. What is your birthdate?________________(Day /Month/Year)**

5. How long have you lived in Alberta? ________No. of years ________All my life

6. What is your educational history? ***(please check all the boxes that apply to you)***

Grade 6 to 9 ☐ Grade 10 to 12 ☐ On-the-job training ☐

If applicable, describe your on-the- job training

____

____

☐ Some College/technical schooling

Name of Program or Courses____

____

☐ **Completed college/technical schooling**

Name of Program and Accreditation__________________________________

☐ **Some university**

Name of Program or Courses__________________________________

☐ **Completed one university degree**

Name of Degree__________________________________

☐ **Some post-degree study**

Area of Study__________________________________

☐ **Completed more than one degree**

Name of Degree(s)__________________________________

7. How many years have you been in the workforce (including all jobs)?

8. Can you please describe your work history by listing briefly all the employment you have had ***(as much as you can remember)*** **and for how long?**

9. What is your current job status? ***employed or unemployed(how long?) or part-time(by choice or not?) or multiple part-time jobs (by choice or not?) or self-employed (contract or self-owned business) or retired (for how long?).*** **Name a position if you hold one and describe the current work you do or your involvements briefly.**

10. What has been the job you most enjoyed and the job you least enjoyed? Why?

11. What is your family situation? ***(single, married, separated/divorced, number and age of children, number of children living with you part or fulltime)***

12. What has been your highest income bracket?

☐ **up to $10,000**
☐ **$10,000 to $20,000**
☐ **$20,000 to $30,000**
☐**$30,000 to $45,000**
☐**$45,000 to $60,000**
☐**$60,000 to $75,000**
☐**$75,000 to $90,000**
☐**$90,000 to $115,000**
☐**$115,000 to $130,000**
☐**$130,000 to $150,000**
☐**$150,000 to $175,000**
☐**$175,000 to $200,000**
☐ **over $200,000**

13. Are you currently earning in this income bracket? If not, why not?

14. What is your total family income bracket?

- **☐ up to $10,000**
- **☐ $10,000 to $20,000**
- **☐ $20,000 to $30,000**
- **☐ $30,000 to $45,000**
- **☐ $45,000 to $60,000**
- **☐ $60,000 to $75,000**
- **☐ $75,000 to $90,000**
- **☐ $90,000 to $115,000**
- **☐ $115,000 to $130,000**
- **☐ $130,000 to $150,000**
- **☐ $150,000 to $175,000**
- **☐ $175,000 to $200,000**
- **☐ over $200,000**

15. How long do you think you could you live on your savings at your current spending?

- **☐ have none**
- **☐ one month**
- **☐ one to six months**
- **☐ six months to one year**
- **☐ 1-2 years**
- **☐ 2-5 years**
- **☐ 5-8 years**
- **☐ 8-10 years**
- **☐ over 10 years**

16. What does the word *sustainability* mean to you? *(write down whatever comes to mind)*

17. What is a sustainable society? How desirable is it? How likely is it?

Pre-Course Conversation Outline

Establishing Interest

1. Why are you interested in taking this course? What intrigued you from the description?
2. What are the key issues for you in terms of working and living? What do you mean by balance…between what?
3. What is it that you want to transform?

Current Work

4. What is your current work or involvements?
5. Do you enjoy your work? Do you derive joy from it?
6. Do you have a sense of vocation, that you are working at your calling?
7. What are the frustrations and difficulties in your work?
8. Do you experience stress in your work? Do you arrive home energized or drained?
9. Who profits from your work?
10. Do you have enough time for family and friends? To participate in worthwhile community activities? Do you get enough rest?

Work Principles

11. What are the primary values or principles by which you try to live?
12. Do these principles guide the work that you do? If not, what values guide your work?
13. Do you have to make compromises to do your work? Ethical compromises?
14. What is the purpose of working?
15. Does your work make a contribution, a difference in someway? Are you satisfied with your contribution?
16. Is your work creative?
17. Do you consider yourself a spiritual person? Does your work have a spiritual dimension?
18. What dreams do you have for your work?
19. Do you feel free to consider alternatives? Why or why not?

Lifestyle

20. Do you feel that you have enough money?
21. Do you feel fulfilled materially?
22. What do you like about your lifestyle? What do you dislike about your lifestyle?
23. Does your lifestyle reflect your values?
24. How do you think your lifestyle relates to the society around you?

25. What is your image of the lifestyle you would like to have?
26. Do you feel free to consider alternatives? to act on alternatives?
27. What changes have you made already?

Global Issues

28. What are the most pressing issues in the world today? Social issues? Environmental issues?
29. Whose responsibility is it to address these issues?
30. Are you contributing to these issues in some way, positively or negatively? Does your work address these issues in any way, positively or negatively?
31. Are you socially aware? Socially responsible? How?
32. Do you consider yourself to be environmentally aware? Environmentally responsible and active? How?
33. Do you think that you could have an impact on these pressing issues? How?
34. Would you like your work to address these issues in some way? How?

Any other comments? Questions about the course? Worries? Fears? Anticipations?

Mid-Course Conversation Outline

1. The course is on Transforming Working and Living and in our first conversation, you said you were interested in taking the course for ………. reason. What is happening in the course for you around this issue? Any insights?

2. You obviously took the course because you wanted to transform aspects of your working and/or living. Have you been thinking about making changes in your working and living? Have you been making changes? What are they and why?

3. Are their fears or barriers that you feel to making change?

4. The central task of the course is for you to clarify your sense of life purpose, your sense of your true work—around which everything else revolves. Do you have an increasing sense of this? What would help you more on this?

5. Perhaps you had some ideas before coming into the course about what you might want to do regarding your working or living? Have these ideas changed or become clearer?

6. What is becoming most important for you with regard to your working and living?.

7. From the new concepts introduced for rethinking living and working—such as balance, sustainability, work as life purpose/true work as well as paid employment, personal/community/ecological sustainability, voluntary simplicity, ecological footprinting, inner fulfillment, material adequacy and social wealth, bioregionalism and globalization/localization—which are most meaningful, helpful?

8. In the presentation of the course, I have used a wide variety of tools to assist us. When I offer it again, I need to know what has stood out for as most meaningful? Least meaningful? The study tours
   - Has the reader been helpful?
   - The journalling/morning pages?
   - Activities (have copies there)

9. Frustrations with the course process or course content?

Final Comments, anything I've missed?

Post-Course Conversation Outline

(Note: not all questions will be asked of each participant)

Name of Participant____

CHANGES IN PURPOSE FOR TAKING COURSE

1. Now after the course has ended and some time has elapsed, do you remember your **original intentions** for taking the course? Are these still important to you? Have they changed at all?

2. In the first conversation, you named the following as **key issues** in your working and living:____.
Are these still key issues? Has the way you understand these issues stayed the same, deepened, changed somehow? If they are no longer key issues, what is becoming more important?

3. You named that you **live by these principles** ____________________________________
Are these still the same, deepened, changed somehow?

IMPACT OF COURSE ON REFLECTION/ACTION

4. **If no, was it the course** that changed your intentions and key issues? If so, how?

5. What ideas in the course were the **most impactful**? What impact did they have? Did they relate to what you were thinking about already or were they totally new?

6. What were some of the big questions that the course raised for you?

7. You originally **defined sustainability** as____
What would be your definition now? Why did it change?

8. Have your **ideas about work** changed? How? Why? What do you now see as the purpose of your work? Is the way in which you do your work different somehow?

9. Have your **ideas about how you want to live** changed? How and why? What do you now see as the purpose of your living? Is the way in which you live different somehow?

10. What were the **options that you saw** for yourself when you entered the course? Have these options changed?

11. **Which tasks** in the course were most impactful? Which have you carried on? Did these tasks relate to something you had wanted to do or were they very new?

12. **What had the most impact**—the ideas or the tasks or both? Did the ideas change your actions or did the actions you did as part of the course change your thinking?

SOCIAL/ENVIRONMENTAL EFFICACY AND AGENCY

13. What would you now say are the **most pressing issues** globally (originally said____?

14. Do you feel you have a better sense of how you could contribute to these issues? Do you see yourself contributing in some way to these issues?
15. Do you feel more socially or environmentally aware? More Responsible?
16. Do you feel that you can make an impact?
17. What do you think are the kinds of work most required in our world today?

THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

18. You said that you **wanted to transform** ________________________________. Did that happen?
19. How did it happen—can you name the process you went through in the course? (anger, resistance, hope, new vision?)
20. How was this course different from other courses you have taken? How was it the same?

CHANGES IN ACTION AND BARRIERS TO ACTION

21. Is your work changing and if so, how? Do you have a new image of your work? What is dying?

22. Is your pattern of living changing and if so, how? Do you have a new image of how you want to live?

23. Do your desires for your working and living reflect your values or have your values changed?

24. Do you feel free to pursue your action plan? What are the frustrations/difficulties you face in changing your working and/or living?

25. What action are your doing presently?

26. What would help to sustain the impact and commitments developed through the course? Do you feel that you have a sufficient support network to sustain the changes you want to make?

CULTURAL PRODUCTION/VOICE/ETHICAL DISCOURSE

27. Can you explain the changes that occurred in the course to others?

28. Do you feel that a new language/vocabulary was developing for you?

29. Do you feel that you have a new web of concepts that guide you?

30. Has you sense of spirituality changed in any way?

31. Did you expect the changes that happened in the course? How do you feel about it?

Would you be interested in one more conversation with me in several months or in subsequent studies that follow your journey from here?

COURSE EVALUATION
For CACE Course 5710
Beyond Training: Transforming Your Working and Living

Date Completed:________________ Name: ____________________________

We would like to ask for your detailed response to the various activities of the course. Your feedback will help to shape future offerings of this course and therefore is very valuable. Please take 30 minutes to complete these questions with as many written comments as possible and return with all the other course materials by December 9, 1998 to me (or no later that Dec. 11 via Dianne or Tonya in the CACE office). The feedback will be summarized for the CACE program, for funders of this project and may be used in the research, upon your review. Thank you once again for your thoughtful assistance. If you feel comfortable identifying yourself, please do so, at the end. Full credits will be given to participants once all the materials have been received.

EVALUATION OF THE COURSE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES:

1. Did this course achieve its objectives? How well were the following objectives achieved?

   a. To go beyond traditional approaches to job training and career development by offering a unique opportunity to create new kinds of work or transform your existing work.

   b. To transform your work while balancing personal and family well-being.

   c. To develop an action plan for working/living that is personally meaningful, useful through contributing positively to local and global communities, and expresses your desires for your future.

   d. To explore the ecological implications of present forms of working and living and to consider new forms that respect the natural world.

e. To rethink the purpose of work (how, why and for whom we do our work) and how work can be redefined in a broader way.

f. To develop principles to guide how you wish to work, what is meaningful work, and the preferred relationship with other facets of your living.

g. To offer perspectives on how the global economy is changing the structure of work and the ethical implications of this.

h. To develop ongoing supportive relationships to assist you in your planned changes.

2. Did you find this course to be meaningful and relevant?

3. Are you leaving with new knowledge, insights, skills and a plan that is relevant and useful?

4. Overall Evaluation

What are you comments overall? Would you recommend the course to others? What changes would you suggest before you recommended it?

EVALUATION OF THE COURSE CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES:

For each of the activities listed, please give the activity a rating on the provided Likert scale. If it does not get a 5 rating, please indicate if you think it should be eliminated as an activity or what could be changed to make it most effective. Thank you.

1= very ineffective 2=ineffective 3=adequate 4=effective 5=very effective

Session One on Transforming Our Thinking about Living and Working:

Identifying Shared Group Issues In Working and Living and Presentation to Class Through Sculpturing 1 2 3 4 5

Introduction of Sustainability Framework (concentric circles) 1 2 3 4 5

Creative Visualization of Balance and Plastercine Image of Balance 1 2 3 4 5

Session Two on Transforming Our Thinking about Living and Working:

Opening Ball Throw Activity on Work and Identity 1 2 3 4 5

River of Your Working Life (including assumptions about work, your work principles and importance of each job) 1 2 3 4 5

Session Three on Transforming Our Thinking about Living and Working:

Myles Kitagawa, Toxics Watch Society 1 2 3 4 5

Linda Aris, Bodyworker 1 2 3 4 5

Diane Shaskin, Terra Whole Foods Market 1 2 3 4 5

Session Four on Transforming Our Thinking about Living and Working:

Dennis Vriend, Vriend Organic Farm 1 2 3 4 5

Evelyn David, Indigo Print and Paperworks 1 2 3 4 5

Study Tour Overall 1 2 3 4 5

Session Five on Revaluing Money and Life Energy:

Opening Relaxation/Stillness Exercise 1 2 3 4 5

Presentation on Your Money or Your Life 1 2 3 4 5
Chart One: How Much Money Does Your Job Cost You? 1 2 3 4 5
Chart Two: How Much Time Does Your Job Costs You? 1 2 3 4 5
Chart Three: What is Your Real Hourly Wage? 1 2 3 4 5
Chart Four: Your Current Life Pie (Did you do this? Yes___ No____) 1 2 3 4 5
Overall Comments on the Impact of these Activities and Information:

Session Six on Revaluing Consumption and Valuing Ecological Footprinting:

Opening Human Web activity 1 2 3 4 5

____

____

Review of Financial "Myths that Require Breaking" 1 2 3 4 5
Presentation on Consumption/ Fulfillment/ "Enough" 1 2 3 4 5
Chart Five on "Where is it all Going (spending categories)?/Hours of Life Energy
Spent for each Category/ Degree of Fulfillment and Congruence" 1 2 3 4 5
Overall Comments on Money and Life Energy Exercises:

____

____

____

____

____

Myles' Presentation on Natural Value (what is provided to us
by the natural world), Ecological Footprinting and Voluntary Simplicity 1 2 3 4 5

____

____

____

____

____

____

Simplicity Totem 1 2 3 4 5

____

____

____

Session Seven on The Principles of Sustainability:

Global Mapping of the Origin of Your Basic Necessities 1 2 3 4 5

____

____

____

____

Presentation on Globalization (the technological impact on work, the near workerless world, the casino economy, the service economy, adjusting to de-jobbing, tiers of elite knowledge workers and McJobs, why companies go global, fading cultural boundaries) 1 2 3 4 5

____

____

____

____

Presentation on the Purpose of Work and Redefining Work as True Work 1 2 3 4 5

____

____(over)

Chart on Redefining My Work
(relationship between paid work relates and true work) 1 2 3 4 5

Presentation on Work and Sustainability Principles
(principles to take us from the industrial era to the ecological era) 1 2 3 4 5

RETREAT SESSIONS
Session Eight on Sustainability:

Fei's Creative Visualization on Leaving Concerns in Jar at Door 1 2 3 4 5

Mind Map of Sustainability 1 2 3 4 5

Group Discussion of the Strengths, Weaknesses and
Outstanding Questions On Sustainability 1 2 3 4 5

Presentation by Ian on Ecological Principles for Working and Living
(balance leads to sustainability, learning from natural systems, energy flows,
matter cycles, biodiversity, dynamic balance, interconnectedness,
getting creative ideas from natural systems) 1 2 3 4 5

Session Nine on Considering Life Purpose and Creating a Personal Vision:

Morning Activities Outside led by Ian on
Personal Awareness of and Connecting to Natural Systems 1 2 3 4 5

Wool Collage of Maturing & Clarifying of Life Dream/Purpose 1 2 3 4 5

Creative Visualization on Meeting the Wise One and
Being Open to Messages, Images 1 2 3 4 5

Session Ten on Transforming Our Working:
Myles' Presentation on Touchstones of My Identity and Alignment with Life Purpose
(choice of one sphere to focus an action plan around and
development of working groups) 1 2 3 4 5

Liz's Presentation on the Framework for the Action Plan 1 2 3 4 5

Generating Key Words for Personal Vision Statement (in pairs) 1 2 3 4 5

Session Eleven on Developing a Vision Statement:
Liz's Introduction to Shaping Your Vision Statement
And Group Work on Each Person's Vision Statement and Description of Work 1 2 3 4 5

(over)

Closing Retreat Activity of Reflections and Thanks 1 2 3 4 5

Session Twelve on the Actions for Your Action Plan:

Opening Activity of Sitting Circle 1 2 3 4 5

Actions Required for Achieving Vision
(Liz's Introduction and Group Brainstorm) 1 2 3 4 5

People Who are Part of Your Action
(Liz's Introduction and Group Brainstorm) 1 2 3 4 5

Session Thirteen on Communicating Your Action Plan:

Opening Activity of Group Massage and Affirming Statements 1 2 3 4 5

Liz's Presentation on Communicating Your Action Plan (Win/Win Negotiation) 1 2 3 4 5

Individual Work/ Paired Discussion and Role Play of an Exchange 1 2 3 4 5

Liz's Presentation on Daily Operations,
Costs/Benefits of Plan, and Contingency Planning 1 2 3 4 5

Working Session on Compiling Action Plan Framework and Identifying
Unanswered Questions and Still-To-Do Tasks 1 2 3 4 5

Session Fourteen on Presentation of Plans and Celebration:

Presentation of Action Plans by Each Participant 1 2 3 4 5

Joan's Slide Presentation on Totems 1 2 3 4 5

Myle's Leadership for Creating a Community Totem (with silhouettes) 1 2 3 4 5

Candle lighting and Hopes 1 2 3 4 5

Celebrating with Food 1 2 3 4 5

EVALUATION OF CLASS ENVIRONMENT

Symbolic Display Table/ Music and Book Display 1 2 3 4 5

Overhead Quotes for Each Class 1 2 3 4 5

Retreat Setting (location, sleeping arrangements, meals, etc.) 1 2 3 4 5

Classroom Setting 1 2 3 4 5

Travel Arrangements for Study Tours 1 2 3 4 5

Overall Comments:

EVALUATION OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Journalling 1 2 3 4 5

Mindfulness Activities

- Looking for symbols of balance__________
- While walking in wild places__________
- Of spending habits__________
- Of clutter__________
- Of natural abundance__________
- Of your senses__________
- Of your simple pleasures__________
- Of creating self-affirmations__________

Other Assignments:

- Compilations of Time and Money__________
- 20-Idea Activity__________
- Writing up Vision Statement__________
- SWOT analysis of Vision__________
- Finishing the Action part of your plan__________
- Finishing the People part of your plan__________
- Doing the Research for all your Win/Win Negotiations__________

- Will you be able to use the materials on day to day operations, costs/benefits of plan and contingency planning?____

"Morning" Pages (did you do fairly regularly yes___ no___) Where they valuable and if so, how?

The Reader (was it valuable, appropriate, too much or too little, did it keep your interest?):

EVALUATION OF COURSE FACILITATION

Were the instructors effective in motivating your interest, stimulating discussion, provoking reflective and critical thinking, communicating the material and using a variety of teaching techniques? Did the instructors have an effective relationship with the whole class, small groups and individuals to facilitate your learning?

Beth

Liz

Myles

Other Comments?

____**Thank You!!**

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORMS

Informed Consent Form
for Research on the Course
Beyond Training: Transforming Your Working and Living
CACE COURSE 5710

Welcome to the course **Beyond Training: Transforming Your Working and Living**! *Please review the following information regarding the research on this course, your participant rights and the proposed agreement. If you would like to participate, please sign and return this form to Elizabeth Lange.*

Purpose of this Research Project

The purpose of this research is to assist adults who are in a work transition or who desire to make a transition toward transforming their working and/or living. The research is comprised predominately of a course that will stimulate reflection about work in the global economy and about the potential of sustainability for transforming work and lifestyles in ways that respect the natural world, protect local communities and yield a higher quality of life.

The research is essentially an impact assessment where the instructor/researcher attempts to record your understandings, experiences and reasons for taking the course before the course begins and to record how your understandings and actions may have changed as a result of your participation in the course. The instructor/researcher will attempt to determine what was effective for helping participants make the changes they specify they wish to make, particularly after considering the content of the course. The instructor/researcher will also attempt to determine what was not effective or other factors that prevented participants from making the kinds of changes they wish to make.

Intended Results and Benefits from the Research

The research will have the following results and benefits:

- It will assist those who are in a work transition to reflect on the global impacts of the work and living choices they make and then to make informed choices about how they will transform their working and living.
- It will provide the necessary skills training that can assist participants in adopting sustainability practices either in their lifestyles or in business or professional development.
- It is a pilot educational program that offers an alternative to conventional job training/career development/business planning programs to fill an expressed need that may be developed into an ongoing program, if successful.

Expectations and Tasks for the Participants

You will be fully informed about the research activities and will be active in designing the latter part of the course according to your needs. To record your understandings and experiences, each individual will be interviewed on tape before, during and after the course. A survey will help to provide information that can give a profile on the class as a group. As well, all of the large class and small group discussions will be tape recorded and you will also be asked to keep a journal of your thoughts and feelings after each class. As the instructor/researcher summarizes the interviews, surveys, discussions and the journals, a summary will be provided back to you so that you can offer feedback on the preliminary findings. You will also have the opportunity to review the final chapter(s) of the dissertation pertaining to the class experiences prior to its dissemination.

Protection of the Participants and the Researcher

Your identity will be concealed in the research by your choice of a alias name and any information that can be combined to reveal your identify will also be concealed. Any information that you provide during the course of the research will be held in the strictest of confidence and only the instructor/researcher will have access to this information. Private information will be reported in only the most general, anonymous terms and primarily on a group basis.

Should you decide to make changes in your lifestyle, work, relationships or in your existing profession, it is expected that these decisions will have been your own informed, fully conscious decisions and that any outcomes are your own responsibility.

Rights of the Participants

You have the right to withdraw from the research process at any time but you may remain in the course and fulfill the course requirements as specified. The instructor/researcher would appreciate advance notification if you are unable to attend a session, are unwilling to participate in the discussions or of your intention to withdraw from the research and/or the course.

Consent

Your consent is being requested by the instructor/researcher, Elizabeth Lange. If the above description and tasks of the research and the protection of your rights are agreeable to you, please sign this form below.

Name
(printed)________________________________ Date__________________

SIGNATURE____

Consent to Publish Form

Transforming Working and Living
A Doctoral Study by Elizabeth Lange
Department of Educational Policy Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta

I understand that the purpose of Elizabeth Lange's doctoral study has been to research educational approaches to transforming working and living in ways that help to create a sustainable and just society. I understand that I have chosen to be a participant in this research through my classroom participation, journal writing and interviews with Beth. I understand that I have had the right to withdraw at any time without penalty or risk. I understand that this information has been analyzed and will be part of the final dissertation. I understand that my identity will remain anonymous and any information I provide will remain confidential.

Should I have any concern about the research process, I am aware that I may contact the Chairperson of the Ethics Review Committee in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at 492-7625.

Upon reviewing the written summaries of the research and having adequate opportunity to make any deletions, additions and changes that I wish, I hereby give my consent to Elizabeth Lange to publish and otherwise disseminate this information that has resulted from the research, given the conditions as outlined above.

printed name signature date

Confidentiality Form

As a support person engaged to assist Elizabeth Lange with the data from her doctoral research, I am aware that any data that I come into contact where the researcher has been unable to conceal the identities of the participants or any information relating to the participants, must remain confidential and their identities must remain anonymous.

I hereby consent to protect the identities of the research participants and to ensure that all research data remains confidential through my involvement with Elizabeth Lange's research.

________________________ ________________________ __________

printed name signature date

APPENDIX F: SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

Principle One: Shifting to a Sun Energy System

We think too narrowly about solar power. After all, fossil fuels are just dead solar power. We need to tap into living solar, that's complementary with the planet.
Greg Allen, Solar Energy Society of Canada

Our current system for generating energy relies on hydrocarbon energy sources that are nonrenewable and have finite ends. Not only are we consuming the supplies of coal, oil and gas at much faster rates than they are produced at, they are releasing high levels of carbon that cannot be reabsorbed fast enough and contribute to global warming. Yet, solar energy is the primary source of energy that enables there to be life on Earth, mainly through photosynthesis. Therefore, the only sustainable source of energy derives from solar energy—either directly, such as using solar panels, biomass energies stored in plants such as food plants or wood plants, or thermal kinetic energy, through water and wind. These sources of energy have little or no environmental impact.

As the transition to renewable forms of energy is taking place, so energy conservation strategies need to put into place. This is called the soft energy path where companies sell savings rather than consumption. The idea is to reward customers for reduced consumption. This is done in diverse ways, either by asking residents to pay monthly payments to cover the installation of conservation devices or by retrofitting (the savings in utilities together with the monthly fee is still less than regular utility bills) or by paying residents to install devices which are paid for by not having to build new power plants.

Principle Two: Eliminating Waste from Production

In the natural world, waste equals food for another cycle of production so that in fact there is no waste. In the natural world, "waste" decomposes into various elements that provide the foundation for new growth. In the human production of goods or services, there should be no waste, in that all waste produced would be the raw material for another cycle of production, as in the natural world. The critical issue in our societies is the creation of toxic waste or non-degradable materials that natural systems have virtually no capacity to convert into benign or desirable substances.

Materials can be continuously cycled and producers need to become responsible for the whole life cycle of the product they produce. No products would be thrown out or disposed of but transferred to another owner and eventually returned to the manufacturer or retailer. This would encourage the most elegant design of products in ways that the product could be disassembled and redesigned for another use. It would ensure durability, generate employment and long term profits, and use less resources and energy. Such an "intelligent product system" mimics natural systems. In this way, companies are held responsible for lifelong "ownership" of the products that they make.

Toxic waste is truly waste—unrecoverable and irredeemable. Toxins such as chlorine, solvents, fungicides, pesticides, refrigerants and organochlorine compounds such as dioxins, DDT, PCBs and CFCs do not exist in free form in nature and do not break down except over thousands of years. They are stored in the fatty tissues of organisms, including humans, and interfere with the endocrine system which in turn interferes with the immune system. In some cases, they can mimic natural hormones and trigger cancer, drops in fertility, and behavioural abnormalities. Toxins are true waste as simply cleaning up dumping procedures does not eliminate the problem of their production in the first place.

Principle Three: Environmental Restoration and Conservation

> *The one process ongoing in the 1990s that will take millions of years to correct is the loss of genetic and species diversity by the destruction of natural habitats. This is the folly that our descendants are least likely to forgive us. (E. O. Wilson, 1992)*

Biological diversity is the source of all wealth (Hawken, 1996: 27). In natural systems, complex webs link animals, plants, air, water, soil and every other animate and inanimate life form. The health of an ecosystem if often measured by the diversity or richness of variation that exists in it. In many cases, humans have developed monocultures of food products and cleared original habitat, so that much of this diversity is disappearing. Endangered species and species extinction is one example of disappearing diversity. Within a biocentric world view, this irretrievable loss is an ethical issue given that human actions, such as overharvesting and habitat loss, are the primary cause of current extinctions.

Many natural areas need to reclaimed so that the rich diversity of life forms can once again proliferate in their natural habitats. Ecological reserves, other kinds of protected areas, and laws against certain kinds of harvesting and trade are examples of preserving diversity. Many environmental groups, scientists, and the United Nations work full-time to ensure that these policies are developed, well-managed, and enforced. With more diversity and a larger interdependent network of species, the collapse of biological systems due to disease and other factors is less possible. Biodiversity initiatives also exist in human food production by re-introducing old plant and animal species, wild foods, natural pest controls, rotating grazing, permaculture, selective forestry, reclamation of school yards with indigenous species, and heritage seed banks.

Principle Four: Eco-Technologies

No humans or other living things can survive without interdependence on multiple organisms and natural processes. Our modern technology of mass production, giantism and efficiency is damaging ecologically, self defeating in terms of non-renewable resources, and alienates people from each other and the Earth. The assumption that underlies this current technology is that humans are above and separate from natural systems and are, in fact, at war with nature struggling to dominate and control them. We need to realize that are not apart from, but that we are a part of, the web of life and try to live responsibly within the natural laws.

Eco-technologies are deliberately founded on respect for the biosphere, in an attempt to find harmony between society and the natural world. They also are designed to mimic and flow with natural processes. Ivan Illich suggests that we need to reverse our relationship with our tools. Rather than seeing nature as needing to be controlled and rather than being enslaved by the demands of our tools, we require a new consciousness about the nature of our tools and we need to take action to control our tools in ways that demonstrate our interdependence with the natural world (1973:12-13). For instance, we need to develop appropriate or human-scale technologies that are adapted to each bio-region; whether it be house construction, food production or health technologies. Small scale technology is compatible with the laws of ecology (renewability), adaptable to the community level, and they serve human needs rather than create scarcity (Schumacher, 1973: 122-123). Technology can work on the principles of integration and synergy where efficiency is achieved not through scale but through scope.

Principle Five: Creative Labour

Our current economy is resource-based, but an ecologically rooted economy would be labour-based and skills-intensive. Eco-businesses choose to use a minimum of energy and resources but a maximum of labour and creativity. Creativity and elegance are the cornerstones of the new kind of growth companies or what is called the "fourth wave of industrialism." The question, then, is how to create work, liberate creativity and develop communities while restoring our natural resources?

Rather than relying on large corporations or the government to provide employment, this can a citizen-led recovery. Rather than taking a chain saw to our natural wealth, citizens flow with and take their cues from these natural systems through biomimicry. This requires people willing to think about what they do as a whole system—whether the system of a house, the human body, or of the fishery. Technology must not make human hands or brains redundant, but instead help them to become more productive than before. Solutions and business ideas flow from the human spirit, the will to create and contribute, and a sense of community. Increasing human knowledge local ecosystems and bridging the natural and human worlds through experiential contact can build respect and the desire for ecological stewardship as well as the knowledge required for innovation.

Principle Six: Localized Economics

One aspect of an ecosystem is a community where groups of different species (plants, animals and microbes) constantly interact with each other and with a defined geographic area. Community ecology is the study of these interrelationships which are usually highly complex. The complexity of patterns determines how stable an ecosystem is and how long it will survive. The more complex a system is, the higher the ability to withstand sudden disturbances or threats. Eco-systems are constantly changing yet they appear stability because the element of dynamic balance operates to ensure that vacated niches are filled or threatened species can repopulate.

One example of applying community ecology within a human community is the principle of relocalization. A healthy community primarily interacts among itself and supplies local needs first, which is the essence of bioregionalism. Gandhi's principle of *swadeshi* is vital—where the resources for living (such as food, shelter and clothes) are derived from one's own locale rather than imported from elsewhere (Kumar, 1996). With a growth, export-oriented economy, communities typically exploit and destroy their local resources for short-term gain. They also specialize in a small number of products rather than diversifying their economic activities which decreases their stability in times of market downturn. Finally, by importing most of their products for living, they exceed their ecological footprint and help to overuse the resources of another bioregion. Rather, communities can re-orient themselves to their own people and bioregion rather than constantly relating outside. This can increase community stability by needing to meet the full range of needs from within itself. In this way, it can restore the viability of a smaller-scale economy—that may relate to but not depend on global economic structures (Mander, 1996). It will also enhance respect for the local bioregion and the resources found there.

To increase a community's autonomy, a community must have the capacity to shift decision-making powers from economic bureaucracies to local non-hierarchical structures, such as community development corporations, community land trusts, community banks and loan funds and cooperative ventures. Local ownership of productive capacities and reinvesting local capital for creative industries is a cornerstone of strong, vibrant and stable communities. The key here is to put local producers and consumers in touch with one another to build collective self-reliance. This pattern repeated globally benefits both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres by allowing for more meaningful work, diverse production, and fuller employment (Norberg-Hodge, 1996).

Principle Seven: Cooperative Citizenship

We have big business and big government. What we need is big community.
Bioregional Philosopher, Whitney Smith

The dominant feature of an ecosystem is the general harmony of a natural community, not competitive relationships as previously thought. Dynamic balance ensures that there is on an overemphasis on one tendency. In human society, overemphasis has been placed on self-assertive tendencies such as competitiveness, expansionism, quantitative growth, hierarchy and dominating power. To restore dynamic balance, focus is required on integrative tendencies such as conservation, cooperation, quality, webbed relationships, and partnership (Capra, 1996).

Community sustainability is reflected in communities that are self-governing, cooperative and therefore protective of their own resources. It requires knowledge and practices that are adapted for each geographic place and that are based on the "social capital" of a community—trust, mutual aid and cooperation. Rather than relying on bureaucratized and professionalized service providers, we can reshape tasks of governing, healing, mediating, nurturing the young and old, spiritual celebrations and educating. People are no longer detached from each other by being professionals, clients, patients, recipients, students or pew-sitters, where there is usually an exchange of money, but as members of a community where gifts are exchanged in the spirit of service.

Based on the elaborate system of Iroquois democracy and community consensus, Jefferson, Franklin and de Tocqueville advocated that only through face-to-face participation in a democracy will people subordinate their immediate interests to the public good. Real power then resides at the local level when citizens have the ability to defend their interests in the face of larger forces and decide on issues that relate to them. It generates passion once again. This can deepen community bonds and in essence, returns government to the people.

Principle Eight: Urban Redesign

The global tendency is towards urbanization even though this strains the resources found within a city and robs other areas of the traditionally symbiotic relationship between people and the Earth. Economic pressures such as cash crops, corporate agriculture, and mechanization are forcing people from subsistence agriculture and family farms. It is estimated that by 2010, 50 to 80 percent of humans will live in cities. If cities are considered a giant organism that sucks in resources from far flung places, spews out its waste to reside elsewhere, and creeps every outwards gobbling up productive farmland, we understand the fundamental problems of the current urban form. While cities are dynamic places of diversity, they overuse multiple resources. The ecological footprint of a city far exceeds the area it occupies and it usually destroys much of the original habitat (Rees & Wackernagel, 1992).

Redeveloping cities into a sustainable form requires developing "complete communities" within cities. It requires looking at cities as liveable habitat for many more species, as biologically productive land, as vast material recyclers, and as energy efficient organisms. Urban sprawl can be contained and even reversed if neighbourhoods have an integrated diversity of activities and amenities in one manageable geographic area—including residential, commercial, institutional, industrial, agricultural, recreational and connector accesses (Munro & Rosenau, 1995). This reduces the need for large transportation corridors and cars, encourages zero-emission industry, revitalizes neglected and unsafe areas, and meets more needs like food production. "In rebuilding themselves for energy efficiency and for human convenience, cities will be doing just what a natural ecosystem does: as it matures, it devotes more energy to maintenance and repair and less to growth" (Callenbach, 1998).

Principle Nine: Simplicity and Meaning

Contrary to what the consumer society tells us, Duane Elgin (1993) suggests that living more simply at a material level enhances the meaning of our life. He defines voluntary simplicity as a manner of living that is outwardly more simple and inwardly more rich because it is spiritually centered. Not only does material simplicity enable us to live within the carrying capacity of the Earth, it takes away the distractions and complications that encumber our relationships and burden our lives. The intention is to live with balance and mindfulness in order to find a life of greater purpose.

Each person and household has a multitude of choices of how to reduce their consumption and enhance the beauty and meaning in their lives. Decluttering our lives in various ways—toxic possessions, activities, and habits of mind—can increase our time, energy and satisfaction. This ensures that the overconsumption of Northern countries is reduced to benefit both the global biosphere and Southern peoples. Decluttering our work can lead to smaller-scale working environments, work that has a spiritual purpose and time for community contribution. Toynbee concluded that the real measure of a civilization's growth was the ability to transfer increasing amounts of energy and attention from the material side of life to the nonmaterial side (in Elgin, 1993). This is reflected in an increased capacity for laughter, celebration, compassion, community spirit and participatory democracy.

Principle Ten: Sense of Place

In the modern worldview, a sense of place has not had much importance. In fact, mobility has been the hallmark of a modern person and progress the hallmark of a modern society. Yet, most of us remember at least one special place in the natural world, particularly from childhood, that we carry with us. Progress has sought to erode this important relationship between people and the land. And both the natural world and native peoples have borne the destructive burden of this worldview—native people being considered rather child-like in their view of the natural world as a living place with spiritual properties. Now, the New Science is confirming that the Earth is a living organism and that reality might indeed be an undivided wholeness, as put forth by many religious traditions for centuries. So, sense of place can be understood as connectedness to the natural world as well as our spiritual place in the universe.

As continents were carved up to create nation-states during the colonial period, the vital interaction between ancient peoples and their land was violated. Today, wide number of independence campaigns by peoples such as the Kurds, Basques, Tibetans, Croatians, Bosnians and the land claims of many native peoples are evidence that people want to re-establish their ancient territories and their strong sense of place. Recovery of many cultural and spiritual traditions and geneological societies is also evidence that there is a desire for a history and a geographic rootedness. Supporting these ancient territorial claims, blocking the global homogenization of culture, speaking against human rights violations, and learning the bioregion we live in is all part of honoring a sense of place.

The New Science is also providing a new cosmology or understanding of our place in the universe. Everything we are and everything we have touched comprised of atoms once adrift in the stars. As David Suzuki (1997) suggests, every breathe we take, we breath the same air with its trillion of molecules as did Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammed. It has cycled through the universe, through volcanoes, and animates our life. Air is the creative force—the spirit or breath that gives us life. We are more than just air breathers; we are creatures made for and by this substance. We need air but living beings create and sustain the air. From our very first cry to our last sigh at death, our need for air is absolute and therefore each breath is a sacrament, an essential ritual, says Suzuki.

Air is but one element—the water that flows through our veins is of the ocean and is bore through our blood, sweat and tears, explaining the many age-old water rituals of transformation, purification, and sharing. Earth is our substance, as Suzuki calls it, we are Earthenware. All our nourishment comes from the soils, again explaining the many agricultural rites performed to bring blessing on the fecundity of the soil. It is also embraces our sense of belonging—that we are made from a particular Earth locale. Similarly, the sun, or divine fire is the energy that flows through all life forms on Earth and gives all the capacity to do work. Only the sun can continuously supply new energy explaining also the reverence for the sun held in many neolithic cultures. This new spiritual sensibility requires new rituals that remind us of who we are and of our place. It is a re-enchantment of the universe.